

PAKISTAN NECESSARY ?

BY

V. B. KULKARNI

AUTHOR OF

The Future of Indian States



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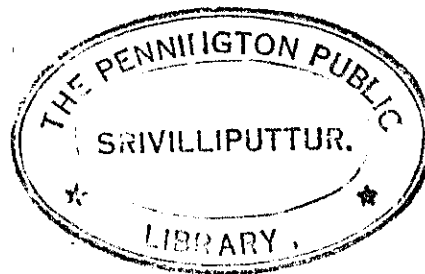
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CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. THE GROWTH OF SEPARATISM	13
3. THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE	29
4. WHAT IS THIS TWO-NATIONS THEORY?	49
5. THE MINORITIES	65
6. PAKISTAN IS UNNECESSARY	75
7. CONCLUSION	87

P R E F A C E

In recent years many books have been written for and against Pakistan. With a few exceptions, most of these books are devoted to the advocacy of partisan views. This is perfectly understandable if we bear in mind that the problem of dividing the country is capable of provoking heated and acrimonious controversies. My object in placing this book in the hands of my readers at this juncture is to give them an authentic study of the September talks which took place between Mahatma Gandhi and Mr Jinnah and to point out the insuperable obstacles which lie in the way of reconciling nationalist interests with the Muslim League's objective.

The Pakistan idea is certainly the child of the present war. In India, as elsewhere, the stress of war has unleashed new forces and created new situations which in normal times would never have arisen. Thanks to the pre-existing disintegrating tendencies in our country, arising out of circumstances which have been fully described in the following pages, the impact of outside forces upon them has rather tended to cause greater cleavage in our body politic. Whereas the overwhelming tragedy of the war has convinced the people of the world of the supreme danger of pursuing the policy of isolationism, in India that very danger is being invited in the name of a satisfactory solution of our domestic problems. But the student of history searches in vain for a parallel to the demand of the Muslim League for dividing a firmly united country.

I have devoted generous space in this book to a description of the growth of separatist tendencies in our country and have attempted to show that, considered from any point of view, there is nothing to recommend the acceptance of the League's objective. This conclusion is forced upon me after a careful study of the problem of minorities in other countries. The division of India according to the C.R. formula or any other formula will only lead to predictable and unforeseen dangers.

I believe that the differences between the Hindu and Muslim communities are not so fundamental as to justify the segregation of the one from the other. A just and honourable compromise is and will always be possible. The object of this book is to enter a plea in favour of our taking such a commonsense point of view of our problems.

This book has been written at a short notice. Perhaps I could have added to its bulk and given some more points if I could devote more time to it. But I believe I have said all that need really be said on the subject.

October 6, 1944

V. B. KULKARNI

1. INTRODUCTION

Today the communal problem of India has assumed the proportions of a national deadlock, being incapable of any reasonable settlement. But communalism in this country drew its first breath and nourishment from disputes over the distribution of seats in the legislatures and of Government patronage. The masses were, and still are, supremely indifferent to political controversies which have no direct bearing upon their economic betterment. Their problems are not those of their communal leaders. They are confronted with the more immediate and vital problem of finding an escape from poverty, dirt, disease and ignorance. They have, however, the native shrewdness to realize the significance of political freedom, and whenever the national issue has been presented to them in terms of bread and butter, they have invariably fought for it with admirable devotion.

It is this economic aspect of the Indian problem which ought to claim the first consideration of every political party in the country. And as no large-scale national planning is possible without political freedom, attainment of this goal becomes a vital and immediate necessity. Communal and sectional interests will doubtless need to be reconciled and adjusted, but as they are neither urgent nor basically connected with the well-being of the masses, they suffer no injury if they await the solution of the larger issues.

Unfortunately, the unhelpful attitude taken up by the Muslim League since the outbreak of this war is rendering the attainment of India's political and economic freedom more and more difficult. The League is no longer interested in percentages of communal representation in the legislatures and the Government of the country. In March 1940 it startled the world by declaring that the Muslims of India are a separate nation. Mr M. A. Jinnah, the supreme exponent of separatism, has again and again asserted that the Muslims are, according to every definition of the word, a separate nation. He is, in fact, primarily responsible for a complete orientation in the League's political objective. Its new goal was defined in a resolution passed at the famous session of the All-India Muslim League held at Lahore in March 1940. The resolution demanding a separate homeland for the Muslims reads thus :

'Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the

All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to the Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, viz. that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute "independent states" in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

In other words, the League demands the breaking-up of the geographical, political and economic unity of India as a condition precedent to the formulation of any constitutional plan for the country.

What are the credentials of the League for putting forward such a startling proposal? And according to what accepted definitions of 'nation' and 'nationality' is it entitled to claim a separate nationality for the Muslims of India? It is noteworthy that the Muslims of India are not the immigrants of yesterday, nor does recorded history say that they came to this country in such numbers as to enable them to maintain their integrity in isolation. In comparison with the teeming millions of the land the immigrant forbears of the present Muslims were but a handful. Their present impressive population of 9,20,58,096 is the combined result of proselytization and birth. For more than eight hundred years they have been living in this country side by side with other communities, with not a thought about their so-called national exclusiveness. It is indeed the League which has for the first time sought to confer the dubious distinction of a separate nationality upon the community. The League may or may not be right in claiming sole representation on behalf of the Muslims of India in order to enforce its demand. Even if its claims are demonstrably true, it does not follow that the other elements in India's national life ought to acquiesce in its political objective. The Pakistan question can only be settled on its merits and not from the point of view of how much or how little support the League is capable of mobilizing on its behalf.

It must be confessed that those who want to study the Pakistan question in earnest have not the means of gaining access to reliable data from which to draw their conclusions. The League has so far denied all help to them in their quest for accurate and complete knowledge. Apart from resorting to artful kite-flying, it has not

INTRODUCTION

officially sponsored any scheme, complete in detail and convincing in argument. Already we have quite a plethora of studies and essays produced by the protagonists of Pakistan, but no two writers have made proposals leading to identical conclusions on the wider implications of dividing the country. It is not sufficient to assert that the Muslim-majority provinces should be constituted into a separate sovereign state, nor is it a positive contribution to the controversy if it is merely affirmed that minorities in Pakistan would receive a square deal. The consequences of tampering with the organic unity of India cannot be averted by vague and ill-conceived assurances. It may perhaps suit the strategy of the League to nurse its plans in secret, but such important questions as the extent of the territories of the new state, the strength and composition of its population, its revenues, and its attitude and policy towards the rest of India, raise their heads like spectres clamouring for precise and clear answers. For, no one can honestly support Pakistan so long as sentiment and emotion are its sole recommendations. The true test of the demand, therefore, lies in the ability of its supporters to prove its necessity as well as its feasibility.

Nor is the League entitled to cling to its theories even after realizing the manifest futility of enlisting for them the support of powerful elements in the country. The much-maligned Hindus are not the only opponents of Pakistan. If they are more outspoken in its criticism, it is because their interests are far more at stake. It is not the purpose of this book to present only the Hindu point of view, nor do I hold any brief on their behalf. But, contributing as they do, the biggest quota to the Indian population, they have a right to be heard in this important controversy.

Out of 38,89,97,955 people, comprising the total population of India, the Hindus are 25,49,30,506 strong. Their interests in the country weight the scale preponderatingly in their favour. Politically, economically and culturally their contribution to national development is impressive. But it is not from the secular point of view alone that they are interested in preserving the unity of the land. India is both their *Matrubhumi* (motherland) and *Punyabhumi* (holy land). Their loyalty is to the country as a whole and not to any part of it. It is the fact of their all-comprehending loyalty to their motherland which has for ages preserved the consciousness of their essential oneness. It is perhaps pertinent to quote in this connexion the observations of the late Mr Ramsay MacDonald who wrote thus :

INTRODUCTION

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

'India, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the Bay of Bengal to Bombay, is naturally the area of a single government. One has only to look at the map to see how geography has fore-ordained an Indian Empire. Its vastness does not obscure its oneness ; its variety its unity. . . . Political and religious tradition has also welded it into one Indian consciousness. Even those masses, who are not aware of this, offer up prayers which proclaim it and go on pilgrimages which assume it.

This spiritual unity dates from very early times in Indian culture. An historical atlas of India shows how again and again the natural unity of India influenced conquest and showed itself in empires. The realms of Chandragupta and his grandson Asoka (305-232 B.C.) embraced practically the whole of the peninsula, and even after, amidst the swaying and falling of dynasties, this unity was the dream of every victor and struggled into being and never lost its potency. . . . Then the British came, and the inevitability of a united India defied their modest proclamations and led them from province to province until they reached the seas and the mountains' (*The Government of India*, p. 29.)

From the Hindu point of view, therefore, India is not a mere geographical expression, nor is the preservation of its unity a matter of mere form or utility. The Hindu conception of India's unity is of a much finer quality and is woven into the very texture of his beliefs and sentiments. Even his daily devotional prayers are based upon a conscious realization of this fact. But his passion for his country is neither exclusive nor selfish. It is his wish and endeavour to persuade others to share his sentiments. Impelled by this motive, he calls upon his countrymen to prevent the disruption of their common motherland. Mr K. M. Munshi, whose plain speaking opposition to Pakistan is well known, writes about the basic unity of India in these terms :

'From Amarnath to Rameshwar, from Dwaraka to Kalighat, the land is one and indivisible. It is sanctified by the sacrifice of Indians of thirty centuries. It is the shrine at which our gods and fathers have worshipped. It is the hope of India's sons ; it will remain such till the end of time. Its indivisibility is the first article of their faith here, their salvation hereafter.

Whoever seeks to part what has thus been joined, will have to walk over the dead bodies of millions of India.

And even then, India will remain one and indivisible.'
(*Akhanda Hindustan*, p. 23.)

But it is not the Hindu community alone which is opposed to Pakistan. There is a large body of independent Muslim opinion which has consistently refused to be swept off its feet by the slogans of the League. Non-League Muslims fully appreciate the enormity involved in the demand for dividing the country. They know that such a step is fraught with grave difficulties and dangers from which the Muslims themselves cannot be immune. Some of these Muslim stalwarts have had to suffer for the courage of their convictions, but their sane attitude gains greater strength as their victimization proceeds.

It is well known that the Sikhs have sworn an implacable hostility to Pakistan. Their numerical strength of 56,91,447 is a correct indication of their importance as a community. In the Punjab, excluding the States, they are 37,57,401 strong. This province is the stronghold of Sikhism. For centuries the Sikhs held sway over it until power was wrested from them by the British in 1849. Having once been the rulers of the province, they refuse to accept the position of a statutory minority in it. In fact, they are opposed to all forms of communal-government and would fight against its imposition as a permanent feature. Mr Jinnah has employed every artifice to win them over to his cause but has signally failed in all his attempts. Their sturdy patriotism and hatred of communalism are the strongest bulwarks against Pakistan becoming a *fait accompli*.

The Indian Christians, numbering 60,40,665, are also not in favour of vivisectioning their country. Their religion has not obscured their vision of a united India. Then there is the small community of Anglo-Indians with a population of 1,40,422 people, which under the wise leadership of the late Sir H. Gidney, expressed itself against the idea of creating separate sovereign states out of the territories of India. The Parsi community, deeply interested in the commercial and industrial development of the country, has unequivocally expressed itself against conceding Pakistan.

Despite this widespread hostility to the division of the country, certain non-Muslim leaders are not only supporting Pakistan but are actually championing it. Dr Ambedkar gave considerable publicity to it through his book entitled *Thoughts on Pakistan*. He has pledged his support to the scheme without acquainting himself with its details and implications. His advocacy on its behalf is dependent upon the hypothesis that the territories of Pakistan

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INTRODUCTION

firmly wedded to the belief that a Congress-League *rapprochement* will alone lead to national freedom and that as such an understanding is possible only by conceding the Pakistan demand, he is prepared to go the whole hog with the League. I do not know whether this is not a facile assumption. If the statements of British official spokesmen are any indication to their minds, there does not appear to be much justification for the optimism of Mr Rajagopalachari. I do not wish to minimize the value of a compromise between the Congress and the League if this could be secured on honourable terms, but disillusionment might be in store for us if we place too much hope in the results of such a compromise. It is profitable to realize that Mr Rajagopalachari's conception of Indian unity does not square with that of Mr Amery who expects much more than a mere *rapprochement* between the Congress and the League. Speaking in the House of Commons on 1st August 1941, the Secretary of State for India declared :

'In this connexion I should like to correct a misapprehension which, judging by the terms of another resolution passed by the same Conference [Non-Parties Conference], seems to have been entertained in some quarters. It is that in insisting upon agreement between the principal elements in India's national life, we were thinking only of the major political parties. The main elements in Indian national life include not only political organizations and the great religious and cultural communities of India ; they also include geographical and administrative entities, the Provinces of British India, more especially those which have not thrown away the responsibility for self-government, and the Indian States. Nor is the substantial agreement which we wish to see achieved necessarily dependent on the fiat of party leaders.'

The fact that this statement was made in 1941 does not deprive it of its validity or significance. The recent debates on India and the utterances of some of the responsible British spokesmen lead us precisely to the same conclusions to which Mr Amery wants us to come. In his interview to Mr Stuart Gelder, correspondent of the *News Chronicle* of London, published on 12th July 1944, Mahatma Gandhi drew pointed attention to the reported determination of Mr Churchill to crush him. There is not, or ought not to be, any controversy in admitting that Mahatmaji is the supreme exemplar of Indian nationalism. If the British Prime Minister has sworn to defeat Gandhiji and the ideals he stands for, it must be obvious that Mr Churchill is no friend of Indian freedom.

What does it matter even if all the parties in the country make united demand so long as he is determined not to concede it ?

Nevertheless, it is necessary to study the scheme put forward by Mr Rajagopalachari, particularly when it has secured the *imprimatur* of Mahatma Gandhi. I give below the text of the scheme :

Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League, to which Mr Gandhi and Mr Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve.

1. Subject to the terms set out below as regards the constitution for a free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim Government for the transitional period.

2. After the termination of the war a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the North West and East of India wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants, held on the basis of adult franchise or other practicable franchise, shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decides in favour of the formation of a sovereign state separate from Hindustan, such a decision shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of the districts on the border to choose to join either state.

3. It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.

4. In the event of separation, a mutual agreement shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, commerce and communications and other essential purposes.

5. Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolute voluntary basis.

6. These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer of Britain of full power and responsibility for the government of India.

The scheme thus sponsored by Mr Rajagopalachari has a certain plausibility of a satisfactory approach to the vexed communal problem of India. Before, however, we study this scheme and its implications in detail and before we record the various reactions to it—this may be conveniently postponed to a later chapter—it is necessary for us in India to guard ourselves against allowing our

INTRODUCTION

judgments to be warped by our own domestic problems, unmindful of the great currents of contemporary international thought, unleashed by the war. It is not a mere flourish of language to say that today the world is passing through great changes. The old order is rapidly yielding place to the new, although we do not yet know the actual import of these changes. Modern wars are totalitarian, not only in the scope of their material destruction, but also in sweeping away the accretions of beliefs and convictions. What was an article of faith but yesterday is an anachronism today and will be a relic of curiosity tomorrow ! Such is the tempo of the change in thought and belief which is taking place everywhere. It, therefore, bodes no good for us in India to ignore this obvious phenomenon.

Students of international affairs know that since the outbreak of this war, the best minds in all parts of the civilized world have been giving all their time and attention to the problems of peace. Thanks to their labours, we are already in possession of a vast mass of rich material, indicating the lines along which post-war reconstruction must be undertaken. The participants in these discussions are not a mere group of impractical idealists, with a weakness for blue-printing. Nor are they men who would like to consign to the scrap-heap everything associated with the *status quo*. Many of them are practical statesmen with a firm grasp over realities. We cannot brush aside the opinions of such leaders as Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, President Roosevelt, Field Marshal Smuts, M. Stalin, Mr Wendell L. Willkie and many others, as the ravings of mad utopians. Indeed, some of these men will play a considerable part in breathing new life and vigour into a spiritually, politically and economically distraught and exhausted world. Even Mr Churchill, who has categorically declared that he did not become His Majesty's first Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire, was constrained, under the compulsion of events, to associate himself with President Roosevelt in drawing up the Atlantic Charter. It is true that it is not a Charter of world freedom and that its terms are not such as to rouse the enthusiasm of non-European peoples in its support. Nevertheless, restricted though it is both in its scope and usefulness, it does represent a step forward, howsoever small and faltering, towards the emancipation of at least a section of mankind.

What, then, are the bases upon which an enduring structure of international peace and co-operation can be built up ? The experience of two major wars in one generation has taught mankind

that wars are not as inevitable as the cataclysms of nature such as earthquakes and volcanoes. They are the result of the volition of man and can, therefore, be avoided by a better and a more scientific organization of international affairs. Despite its great diversities, the world we live in is an extremely interdependent world. Scientific development has knit mankind much more closely than ever before. The trifling Mukden incident in far-off China produced world-wide repercussions, leading to a long-drawn-out war between China and Japan. The dismemberment of a comparatively small country like Czecho-Slovakia paved the way for the second world war. Such is the interdependence of the world and its affairs. The development of a world polity, upon which alone the hope of mankind rests, is seriously hampered by the growth of unchecked national egotism in sixty odd states into which the world is parcelled out. Every petty state, with not even the means of an organized and modern government, flaunts its own individual political, economic and military sovereignty in utter disregard of its dependence upon other countries. It is this tendency towards exclusive and self-regarding nationalism which has divided the world into unnatural fragments, leading to international conflicts. Much has been written for and against the Treaty of Versailles, but its fatal weakness lay in the fact that its framers committed an error of judgment in creating more sovereign states in Europe. The Succession States, instead of realizing the limitations inherent in the smallness of their size, population and resources, blindly imitated their big neighbours by pushing their independence to dangerous lengths. Had they collaborated with one another in promoting a common economic policy and a common defence, Germany and Italy would in all probability have realized the hazards of attacking them. This they failed to do and invited their own destruction.

Thus, the tragic events of the last few years have opened men's eyes to a realization of the dangers of a politically and economically fragmented world. The natural tendencies of our times are towards integration, and, sooner or later, history is bound to repeat itself if these tendencies are ignored. Isolated small states will continue to offer themselves as a fatal bait to power politics. The problem of the future is, therefore, to discover the means by which the nations of the world could be brought together in furtherance of common objects. Many suggestions have been put forward for attaining this end. One school of thought believes in reviving and revitalizing the League of Nations, while another is in favour of a

world union. It is not possible just at present to foresee what form international co-operation will eventually take. Perhaps, world statesmanship will prove itself so bankrupt as to make it possible for power politics to reassert itself. But such an eventuality does not alter the basic truth that the world we live in is essentially one and indivisible. It is, however, heartening to remember that some of the most outstanding personalities of our times are fully alive to the requirements of the situation. I give below the opinions of some of them on the problems of peace because they have a special relevancy to our controversy over the Pakistan issue.

Marshal Chiang Kai-shek is a colourful personality with a robust international outlook. Here is a passage from one of his many utterances on the problems of peace :

'We hold that we must advance from the narrow idea of exclusive alliance and regional blocs, to effective organization of world unity. Unless real world co-operation replaces both isolationism and imperialism of whatever form in the new interdependent world of free nations, there will be no lasting security for you or for us.' (Quoted by Mr Wendell L. Willkie in his book *One World*.)

President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms are too well-known to need elaboration here, but the following extract from his broadcast talk to his people on the occasion of America's entry into the war, is of interest. Thus spoke the President :

'The true goal we seek is far above and beyond the ugly field of battle. When we resort to force, as now we must, we are determined that this force shall be directed toward the ultimate good as well as against the immediate evil. We Americans are not destroyers—we are builders. We are now in the midst of a war, not for conquest, not for vengeance, but for a world in which this nation, and all this nation represents, will be safe for our children. . . . We are going to win the war, and we are going to win the peace that follows.'

Mr Wendell Willkie, an important figure in America,¹ is a well-known advocate of the new order. In his book referred to above which was written after visiting a number of war-torn countries in Africa, Europe and Asia, he says thus :

'When I say that peace must be planned on a world basis I mean quite literally that it must embrace the earth. Continents and oceans are plainly parts of a whole, seen, as I have seen

1. The tragic news of Mr Wendell Willkie's death was received when this book was in press.

them, from the air. England and America are parts ; Russia and China, Egypt, Syria and Turkey, Iraq and Iran are also parts. And it is inescapable that there can be no peace for any part of the world unless the foundations of peace are made secure throughout all parts of the world.'

Lastly, let me quote M. Stalin, the sphinx of the Kremlin, and a past-master in springing agreeable surprises upon the world. M. Stalin is a man of few words and his *forte* is action. To get a peep into the mysterious corners of his mind is, therefore, not a small gain. The following quotation from one of his rare utterances is of interest. His conception of a just peace is :

'Abolition of racial exclusiveness, equality of nations and integrity of their territories, liberation of enslaved nations and restoration of their sovereign rights, the right of every nation to arrange its affairs as it wishes, economic aid to nations that have suffered and assistance to them in attaining their material welfare, restoration of democratic liberties, the destruction of the Hitlerite regime.' (Quoted in *One World*, p. 70.)

This is how international problems are viewed by men who are playing a decisive part in the defeat of the Axis. The fact that their countries have been bled white in the war has not warped their minds in realizing the supreme necessity of international co-operation. Yet, by a strange irony, we in India are toying with the idea of breaking its unity which has been ordained by God, man and nature. It is necessary for us to realize that our country is an integral part of the world and that it cannot remain indifferent to the great movements which are taking place outside its borders. We object to Pakistan because it is in flagrant violation of the prevalent tendencies towards unity. We also object to it because it is unnecessary and impracticable. Surely, the supporters of Pakistan ought to realize the serious consequences of vivisectioning a firmly united country. We do not know whether they have sufficiently pondered over its implications, but we oppose it on principle. It does not require much imagination to realize what kind of 'state' will emerge from a dismembered India. The meaning of Pakistan has been proclaimed as the 'Land of the Pure'. Non-Muslims, according to this definition, are 'impure'. Pakistan is, therefore, another name for a religion-state where the existence of 'non-conformist' populations cannot be happy. We are asked to give our support to the creation of such a state in order that medieval traditions might be resurrected and enthroned !

2. THE GROWTH OF SEPARATISM

In the last chapter I referred to the claim of the Muslim League that the Muslims of India are a distinct nation and that they are, therefore, entitled to a separate homeland, carved out of the Indian territories. The tendency towards separatism, of which Pakistan is the extreme expression, has been in continual operation for nearly four decades and has today assumed the proportions of an uncompromising demand for vivisectioning the country. This tendency has its roots in the well-concerted design for frustrating Indian nationalism. Certain writers are, however, not inclined to view the communal problem in this light. They hold that communalism is a fact of historical growth and that throughout history there has been no love lost between the two communities. If this interpretation of history and of the Hindu-Muslim relationship is correct, then the present attitude of the Muslim League becomes less untenable, at least on the ground that it is after all much wiser for the two communities to part from one another rather than remain together as mutually irreconcilable partners.

But to say that the Hindus and Muslims have never known the wisdom and advantage of living together is to be guilty of misreading the history of the past. Let us face facts. It is well-known that the earliest forbears of the Muslims of India came to this country a little over a thousand years ago. Since that long period of time they have been living in this land, sharing its joys and vicissitudes with their fellow-countrymen of other faiths. It is true that they came as conquerors but they stayed as the sons of India. It is also true that they held sway over the country for many centuries till power departed from them after the dissolution of the Moghul Empire, precipitated by the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. But even during the palmy days of their sovereignty they did not forget their obligations to the people of the land. Their co-operation with the Hindus in the fields of diplomacy and administration was unrestricted and complete. Almost from the very beginning of Muslim rule, Hindus became the pillars of state. Even the celebrated Mahmud of Gazni was not such a Hindu-baiter as he is commonly depicted in history. He employed Hindu officers and Hindu troops to suppress his own recalcitrant co-religionists. Under him a Hindu officer by the name of Tilak rose to the rank of Commander of all his Indian troops. (See *The Communal Triangle in India*, by Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, p. 18.)

The tendency towards interdependence was in the nature of

things inevitable, and it found its amplest scope and expression under the Moghul Emperors. The wise and benevolent policy of Akbar removed from the minds of the Hindus the lingering traces of bitterness, engendered by differences in religious outlook. The Emperor had a genius for attracting men of talent to his side. Great Hindu generals, statesmen, scholars and artists rallied round him and swore undying loyalty to his Person and Throne. Who does not know the inestimable services rendered to the Empire by such men as Man Singh and Todar Mall? The successors of Akbar had the sagacity to continue his wise policy, which was only reversed by Aurangzeb, who for that reason became the last Moghul! But it was not the Moghuls alone who distinguished themselves in enlisting Hindu arms and statesmanship in the conduct of public affairs. That was a common practice all over the land. The Bahamani kings of the Deccan depended far more upon Hindu soldiers and statesmen in the administration of their realms. The father of the great Sivaji was the bulwark of the Bijapur throne.

This liberal attitude of the Muslim rulers was fully reciprocated by the Hindu kings. The great kings of Vijayanagar, who, according to Robert Sewell, were 'the saviours of the south for two and a half centuries', freely employed Muslims in their armies whose strength was estimated at eleven lakhs by Abdur Razzak, an envoy from Persia. The broad-minded toleration of the kings and the peace and tranquillity which they gave to their subjects, drew wealth as well as men to their realms. So great was the prosperity of the kingdom and the splendour of the capital that Razzak goes into raptures in their description. (See *A Forgotten Empire*, by Robert Sewell.) Even today visitors to the ruins of the once mighty city of Vijayanagar are shown certain parts of the ruined city where Muslims were said to have lived in large numbers. Religious toleration and recruitment of Muslims into the services were, as I have already said, a common practice. The resurgent Hindu state under Sivaji followed this great tradition. Thus write the authors of the book *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India* :

'Under Sivaji the Maratha armies had been catholic, offering employment to Muhammedans and even untouchables. The navy was even more catholic, being often officered largely by Muhammedans. Kanhoji was no less generously hospitable.' Grant Duff in his *History of the Mahrattas* and even historians hostile to Sivaji have paid warm tributes to his broad-minded

religious toleration and to his friendly and generous attitude towards his Muslim subjects.

But it was not merely in the military, administrative and political spheres that this happy feeling of mutual confidence existed between the Hindus and Muslims. The example set by wise and enlightened rulers was contagious. The desire among the intelligentsia of both the communities to understand and share the cultural heritage of one another, as embodied in their respective religions, art, literature, music and philosophy, became fairly wide-spread. This thirst for knowledge was productive of great results. Translations of Sanskrit and Persian classics were made and placed into the hands of the common people. The Muslims had brought paper to India and this greatly facilitated the growth of knowledge. The courts of enlightened kings became the meeting-ground of scholars, not only to enable them to propound their own systems of thought, but also to understand the points of view of others. Thus, the stage was set for the fusion of Hindu art, literature and music with those of the rulers of the land, leading gradually to a synthesis of Hindu-Muslim culture, which is today one of the coveted possessions of India.

The subject of Hindu-Muslim concord is capable of considerable development, and what has been written in the preceding paragraphs is but the merest reference to it. Even this hasty retrospective view would have been unnecessary had the critics of Hindu-Muslim differences shown a greater sense of proportion and responsibility in their criticisms. One can understand and even condone the misreading of Indian history by interested foreigners, but there is no valid excuse for Indian writers, particularly of the standing of Dr Ambedkar, for according an exaggerated importance to the communal problem and then declare that it is insoluble except on the lines of Hindu-Muslim separation. This is what Dr Ambedkar says on the subject :

‘What stands between the Hindus and Muslims is not a mere difference : it is an antagonism as distinguished from mere difference. This difference is not to be attributed to material causes. It is spiritual in its character. It is formed by causes that take origins in historical, religious, cultural and social antipathy of which political antipathy is only a reflection.’
(*Thoughts on Pakistan*, p. 331.)

This is clearly an unfair conclusion. It is not fair to draw up such indictments on the basis of certain isolated episodes in history. Of course, it is no use glossing over the misdeeds of

certain bad rulers. Religious fanaticism and intolerance have certainly tarnished certain periods of Indian history, but it is unjust to visit the sins of some upon the heads of all. Moreover, we do ourselves less than justice in trying to sit in judgment upon the actions of men, who lived and died centuries ago, in the light of modern conceptions of right and wrong. At one time or another, almost every country in the world has passed through a dark period in its history when dark deeds were done. After all, religious fanaticism was not the especial guilt of India. It was a guilt which almost every country in the East as well as in the West shared in a small or a large degree. It is worthy of note that even democratic England, which wrested its Magna Charta from King John as early as in 1215 A.D. was for centuries incapable of suppressing its religious wars and other barbaric practices associated with religious intolerance. Witch-baiting and the burning of dissenters on the stakes were practised down to the 19th century. Take the well-known example of the religious, social and political disabilities of the Irish Catholics, who, till recent times, suffered indescribable hardships and humiliations for the 'crime' of clinging to the faith of their ancestors. I would ask my readers to peruse the formidable catalogue of Irish Catholic disabilities, as described by Mr Francis Hackett in his book *The Story of the Irish Nation*, (pp. 166-167) in order to realize that religious intolerance could go no farther. But today no religious persecution and no religious differences mar the unity of Eire because she is free.

Dr Ambedkar's analysis of the communal problem is, therefore, wrong and his prescriptions worse than the disease. The Hindus and Muslims have lived together, not only as good neighbours, but as collaborators in many fruitful fields of national uplift. The great revolt of 1857 was not the work of any single community, nor was the subsequent national awakening the result of the single-handed efforts of the Hindus. The fact of the matter is that communalism is not only one of comparatively recent growth, but is the result of an effort to side-track the issue of India's freedom. Not to view it in this light is, therefore, to become guilty of a wrong perspective.

It is reasonable to suppose that the Hindus and Muslims would have striven together in raising their country to the position of a modern state, had they been free during the most crucial period of their history. Most of the tendencies towards articulate nationalism were already there, struggling to come to the surface. The wonderful geographical unity of the land, a common cultural

heritage and the economic interdependence of the people, were factors contributing to the growth of a common consciousness. It is worthy of note that even during the most decadent period which followed the disappearance of the Moghul Empire, the people of the land never lost sight of their basic unity. Western writers, by no means sympathetic to Indian political aspirations, have freely recognized this fact. Dealing with the unity of India Sir Alfred Lyall says :

‘Although the Indian people are broken up into diversities of race and language, they are as a whole not less distinctly marked off from the rest of Asia by certain material and moral characteristics than their country is by the mountains and the sea. The component parts of that great country hang together, physically and politically ; *there is no more room for two irreconcilable systems of government than in Persia, China or Asiatic Turkey.*’ (Italics mine.) (*The Rise and Expansion of the British Dominion India*, pp. 283-284.)

But this unity of India lacked two essential attributes to enable the growth of full-fledged nationalism. These deficiencies were, first, the absence of a strong central government to enforce law and order throughout the land and, secondly, the inaccessibility of the fruits of scientific development for reducing the continental size of the country to manageable dimensions. Both these deficiencies were supplied by the British rule and modern inventions. A unified system of government for the whole country and the introduction of the railway and the telegraph were perhaps the greatest gifts of the British to this country.

The fact that after a lapse of centuries India once again came under one rule and was for the first time knit together by the quick means of transport and communication was productive of tremendous results. Men hailing from different parts of the country and drawn from diverse elements in India's national life, could now meet at regular and frequent intervals and discuss and decide on problems common to them all. The frequency with which these meetings were held and the wide publicity which they received in the rapidly growing Indian Press, naturally enlarged the outlook of the people until it very soon comprehended the whole of India. The cultural and spiritual bonds which had united them for centuries were now strengthened by the political consciousness of their common nationality. It is, therefore, no small tribute to the national awareness of the Indian people that within three decades after the coming of the railway and the

telegraph to this country, they were able to give an organizational basis to their nationalism by founding the Indian National Congress in 1885.

It is undeniable that the British helped Indian nationalism to discover itself, but the degree of credit which certain British writers and statesmen take in assisting Indian awakening is not borne out by facts. In his Foreword to a collection of his speeches entitled *India and Freedom* Mr Amery claims that the British 'inspired a passionate demand for a self-governing freedom which India had never known.' It is not necessary to join issues with Mr Amery just at present, but one can scarcely find any testimony to a more valuable contribution of the British to India than that of law and order. But law and order alone cannot weld a people into a nation. If, indeed, it could, the various colonies of the Europeans, which have enjoyed sufficient internal peace, should have by now vibrated with national passion and strained at the leash of foreign rule, as in India. There would have been no nationalism and no national movement in India had not its people been conscious of their pre-existing unity. Moreover, the influence of nationalism is not always towards unity and where the composition of a population is marked by diversity, nationalism tends towards division and disunity. The best illustration of this is provided by Europe. Comparing India with Europe the authors of *A Short History of India* write thus :

'Had the administrative pressure which operated at this time in India been applied to Europe as a whole, the result would certainly not have been to evoke a common European feeling ; it would rather have intensified the regional and separatist sentiments of the various nations. But India differed from Europe in the tendency towards unity which already existed, and the pressure from above operated to reinforce this tendency, and to bring it more definitely into the regions of consciousness ; the ties which united Indians began to be talked about and thought about.' (*A Short History of India*, by W. H. Moreland and Atul Chandra Chatterjee, pp. 391-392.)

It is, of course, foolish to mistake the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan as a manifestation of European tendencies in India. These tendencies, if indeed they had ever existed, should have made themselves felt much earlier instead of awaiting their incubation by the League a mere four years ago !

The fact is that while Indian nationalism needed a little

assistance to find its feet, it is wrong to argue on that account that it is in perpetual need of crutches to support itself. The history of the Congress, the supreme exponent of Indian nationalism in the early stages of national awakening, belies assertions to the contrary. From its very inception, the Congress has been steadily striving towards the attainment of a single objective, namely, the political freedom of the country. If the assertion of Mr Amery that Britain has inspired in India 'a passionate demand for a self-governing freedom' is true, what has been the attitude of the powers-that-be towards the Congress during these sixty years? Is that attitude sympathetic, neutral, or hostile? It must be borne in mind that the Congress, while disconcertingly steady in making its demands upon the Government, did not for many long years forswear the methods of constitutional agitation. Its demands were couched in the language of prayer and petition. Its leaders were strong believers in the British connexion and would have been quite happy with the status of a self-governing dominion for their country.

But neither did its moderation nor its unswerving faith in the good intentions of Britain, bring immunity to the Congress from the Government's suspicion. Long before it came into existence, far-seeing officials saw the dangerous implications of imparting administrative unity to this country. They realized that out of this unity would arise an awakening that would lead sooner or later to a demand for freedom. Such a prospect was more than they could relish. They, therefore, decided to fight the Congress as soon as it was started. This they could not do in the totalitarian fashion, for the Congress was too embarrassingly loyal to be bludgeoned to death! But there were other less drastic, but nonetheless effective, means with which to neutralize its growing influence. Selfishness is the weakness of man all the world over and it is always easy to deflect him from the straight and narrow path of rectitude. The present war has borne testimony to this truth in a vivid manner. The Government had a plenitude of power and patronage at its disposal, and it was perfectly easy for it to prevent certain sections of the Indian population from joining the 'seditious ranks'.

But the fight against Indian nationalism was begun several years before the Congress was started. A number of plans had long been in contemplation for erecting a barricade between the Hindus and Muslims. In the years following the Mutiny official action had gravely wronged the Muslims by singling them out

for punishment. All the efforts of Lord Canning to prevent his irate countrymen in India from waging a war of vengeance against the Muslims were frustrated. They nick-named him 'Clemency Canning' and his policy of pacification was openly condemned and derided. The gloom that enveloped the country in the post-Mutiny period is graphically described by Dennis Kincaid and I would ask my readers interested in this subject to peruse his excellent book *British Social Life in India*.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was one of the most outstanding Indian personalities who lived during those dark days. He watched with grief the terrible ordeals and humiliations which his community was made to suffer. His heart bled for his co-religionists. But he was not a narrow-minded partisan. In the early days of his public career he played a great part in upholding India's right to freedom. He had also none of the new-fangled conceptions of the Muslim League that the Hindus and Muslims are two different nations. His utterances on the subject have a great value today and I reproduce one of them here. Thus said Sir Syed :

'In the word Nation, I include both Hindus and Muhammadans because that is the only meaning I can attach to it. With me it is not worth considering what is their religious faith, because we do not see anything of it. What we do see is that we inhabit the same land, are subject to the rule of the same governors, the fountains of benefit for all are the same, and the pangs of famine also we suffer equally. These are different grounds upon which I call both these races which inhabit India by one word, i.e. *Hindus*, meaning to say that they are the inhabitants of Hindustan. While in the Legislative Council I always was anxious for the prosperity of this nation.'

But by a strange irony, this great patriot and a doyen of Indian nationalism began to exhibit a strange doubt about the soundness of his own position and staged one of the most astounding changes of front known to the modern history of India. By 1885 he had renounced the convictions of a life-time and openly ranged himself against the Congress and all it stood for. What was the reason for this strange and sudden reversal of his position ? Allama Shibli Numani, one of the valued colleagues of Sir Syed and himself a great nationalist, could have thrown useful light on the subject, but he chose to relegate it to the limbo of oblivion because he thought that such a revelation 'might prove harmful to our cause'. But time has revealed the reasons which impelled Sir Syed to abandon his nationalism in favour of communal

THE GROWTH OF SEPARATISM

partisanship. We have already referred to the great concern which was felt for his community during the post-Mutiny period. The policy of the Government had embittered the feelings of the Muslims who had learnt to view its actions with profound suspicion. Their sullen indifference towards the progressive tendencies of the times caused them much harm. Sir Syed was determined to wean them from this attitude and he thought that he could do so only by making common cause with the Government. He was assisted to arrive at this conclusion by Mr Beck, Principal of the Aligarh College. Mr Beck argued with the aging patriot and convinced him that while the Congress could do nothing for the Muslims, the Government could do much for them.

The part played by Mr Beck and his two successors, Mr Theodore Morrison and Mr Archbold, in the public life of India had a considerable effect in promoting separatist feelings amongst the Muslims. Mr Beck was a tireless worker and during the fifteen years of his control over Aligarh politics, he did everything in his power to discredit India's right to freedom. He made a free use of the name of the Muslims for his own purpose. When Mr Charles Bradlaugh introduced a Bill in Parliament in 1889 with the object of conferring democratic institutions on this country, Mr Beck got up a memorial on behalf of the Muslims, remonstrating with the Government about the impolicy of such concessions. He obtained 20,735 signatures to this memorial, largely with the aid of Aligarh boys who were stationed at the Jumma Masjid on a Friday for the purpose. The signatories were naively told that the purport of the petition was to prevent the Hindus from obstructing cow-slaughter!¹ Three years later, in December 1893, the indefatigable Mr Beck assisted in founding what was known as the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental Defence Association of Upper India, and obligingly became its Secretary. The aims and objects of this Association were : (1) to acquaint Englishmen in general and the Government in particular with the views of the Muslim community and to protect the political rights of the Muslims, (2) to support measures that would strengthen British rule in India, (3) to spread feelings of loyalty among the people and (4) to prevent the spread of political agitation among the Muslims. Mr Beck was a man of single-minded devotion to duty, which consisted not in preparing his wards at the Aligarh College into useful and patriotic citizens of their country, but in tampering with the unity of India. He

1. *The Communal Triangle in India* p. 58-59. I am greatly indebted to this book in the preparation of this Chapter.

saw how the Hindus, with the advantage of a better education and a quicker perception of Indian ideals, were steadily pushing forward the national movement. He believed that the time had now come for the Government to tip the balance of counterpoise in favour of the Muslims. This he chose to do by discrediting the movement and by exaggerating the so-called differences between the Hindus and Muslims. Here is his masterpiece of misrepresentation :

'The past few years have witnessed the growth of two agitations in this country : one, the Indian National Congress, the other, the movement against cow-slaughter. The former is directed against the English, the latter against the Muslims. The objective of the Congress is to transfer the political control of the country from the British to the Hindus. . . . Mussalmans have no sympathy with these demands. . . . In order to stop cow-slaughter the Hindus have gone to the extent of boycotting the Muslims. . . . the result is seen in the sanguinary riots in Azamgarh and Bombay. *It is imperative for the Muslims and the British to unite with a view to fighting these agitators and prevent the introduction of democratic form of government, unsuited as it is to the needs and genius of the country. We, therefore, advocate loyalty to the Government and Anglo-Muslim collaboration.*' (Italics mine.)

Mr Beck was a man of strong convictions. He believed in the impossibility of democratic institutions thriving on the Indian soil. He was equally convinced that while Hindu-Muslim unity was impossible, an Anglo-Muslim alliance was easy and perfectly feasible. He gave a free expression to these feelings in a speech in England.

Mr Theodore Morrison's contribution to the communal problem was not so very outstanding but he diligently kept the torch of his worthy predecessor burning. Mr Morrison was followed in 1905 by Mr Archbold, another colourful personality. It was this Mr Archbold who was the real prime-mover and the soul of the famous Muslim Deputation which waited upon Lord Minto in 1906. He arranged everything to the minutest detail, and perhaps had a hand in drafting the address as well ! In his letter of 10th August 1906 to Nawab Mohsinul-Mulk, he indicated the lines on which the move should be made.

'I would here suggest that we begin with a solemn expression of loyalty. The Government decision to take a step in the direction of self-government should be appreciated. But our

THE GROWTH OF SEPARATISM

apprehension should be expressed that the principle of election, if introduced, would prove detrimental to the interest of the Muslim minority. It should respectfully be suggested that nomination or representation by religion be introduced to meet Muslim opinion. We should also say that in a country like India due weight must be given to the views of zamindars.' Everything went 'according to plan', Mr Archbold discreetly keeping himself in the background.

There is no doubt that the Muslim deputation of 1906 was far more important than all the efforts of men like Lord Lytton, Sir Auckland Colvin and Lord Curzon to enforce the doctrine of *Divide et Impera*. Here at last was an opportunity for driving a wedge between the two major communities so as to make it impossible for them to meet on a common political platform in the governance of their country. The opportunity was too great to be lost, and Lord Minto seized it with both hands. He cordially received the deputation in the name of the entire Muslim community and readily conceded the demands of the deputationists. He agreed to give them communal representation and to accord them preferential treatment on the ground of their historical importance and services rendered to the British Empire. Here is an extract from his reply to the deputationists :

'I am entirely in accord with you. . . . I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement, regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of the representative institutions. In the meantime I can only say that the Mahommedan community may rest assured that their political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded by any administrative reorganisation with which I am concerned.'

It is not necessary to dwell at length upon the dangerous implications of the various theories put forward by Lord Minto in defence of his policy, but a few facts might be stated. His verdict that the system of joint electorates 'would be doomed to mischievous failure' was indeed a strange one when we remember that it had never been given any trial whatsoever. In fact, conditions for introducing this system were far more favourable in his own times than at present. Communal consciousness in its present virulence was then conspicuous by its absence, and a government

mindful of its obligations towards its people, could have exerted its great influence for the success of the system. It should have been evident to him that communal representation, instead of transforming a backward community into a progressive one, would only lead to its political isolation and stagnation. At a time when official action was the only prime mover in matters of public importance, it was the clear duty of the Government, if indeed its new-fangled solicitude for the Muslims was genuine, to provide a common political meeting-ground for the various communities in the land to enable them to meet one another in a spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation; for, as H. G. Wells truly points out, there can be very little community of feeling between men outside the range of frequent intercourse.

Secondly, Lord Minto banked too much upon public credulity when he referred to the historical importance of the Muslim community and its services to the Empire. I have already mentioned the tribulations of the Muslims in the years following the Mutiny. Even before that event the counsels of the powers-that-be were dominated by a profound distrust of the Muslims—a fact which is made clear from the belief held by Lord Ellenborough (1842-1844) that 'this race [Muslims] is fundamentally hostile to us and therefore, our true policy is to conciliate the Hindus.' Evidently, Lord Minto forgot the whole range of recent historical facts in his anxiety to fit his unfounded theories with his intentions. One wonders what historical importance could have been discovered in a suspected community and what great services it could have rendered to the rulers of the land. The real intentions of Lord Minto were to throw a cordon between the Hindus and Muslims in order to weaken the Congress. The desire of the Muslim intelligentsia for sectional representation, therefore, came as a veritable godsend to him. That he had been deeply engrossed in discovering some means for fighting the Congress, even before the Muslim deputation waited upon him, was made clear by himself in his letter of May 1906 to Lord Morley in which he wrote :

'I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible counterpoise to Congress aims.'

The promises of Lord Minto to the Muslim deputationists were duly incorporated in the Morley-Minto Reforms.¹ In a speech at the English-speaking Union on 21st November 1940

1. Referring to the Muslim deputation of 1st October 1906 an official wrote to Lord Minto that it was 'nothing less than the pulling back 62 millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition'.

paradoxically called 'Our Indian Record', Mr Amery made the following observation :

'In 1906 the All-India Moslem League was formed and was soon after in a position to secure from a *profoundly reluctant* Secretary of State the right to separate communal representation under the new reforms.' (Italics mine. See *India and Freedom*, p. 23)

The words 'a profoundly reluctant Secretary of State' were, I suggest, more in the nature of an adornment to Mr Amery's speech than a statement of sober fact. Where was the reluctance of Lord Morley to sanction communal representation for the Muslims? In fact, he wished godspeed to Lord Minto's Indian policy and blessed his attempts to weaken the growing influence of the Congress.

But liberal sentiment in India and in England revolted at the prospect of introducing communalism as a deliberate policy of the Government. No less a person than Sir Valentine Chirole was constrained to admit that the Reforms 'served to widen the breach between Mohammedans and Hindus at the very moment when India was entering on a new stage of political development.' The *Statesman* was even more outspoken in its condemnation of communal electorates. It wrote :

'Even more questionable than the efforts of the Government to aggrandize the landed interests is their courting of Mohammedan support. . . . We view with grave concern the action of the Government in selecting one section of the population for differential treatment such as is not tendered to any other portion. . . . The more carefully the Council Reforms mooted by the Government of India are considered the more apparent does it become that the scheme amounts to little else than the provision for including in the Legislative Councils more land owners and more Mohammedans.' (Quoted in *The Communal Triangle in India*, pp. 65-66)

But objections and opposition to the scheme were of no avail. The Government had wanted it more than the Muslims themselves. Thenceforward the system of separate communal representation became the bed-rock of Indian policy. The Laws of Medes might perhaps change, but not so the principle of sectional representation in India. Its harmful influences were recognized in those countries in which it existed and the system abolished betimes. The Hilton Young Commission recommended its abolition in Kenya in favour of a common roll. The following reasons were given by the

Commission for its recommendation :

‘It is argued, on the other hand, that the communal system offers little room for political progress. While securing the representation of different interests it does little to reconcile them. It tends rather to promote the election of men of extreme views who will emphasize the differences. The different communities in Kenya can only attain to healthy political life if they learn to compose their differences and the common good. The surest foundation for a stable constitution is community of interests rather than a nice adjustment of opposing forces. *The communal system where it has been tried has tended to accentuate differences and prevent the growth of a healthy political life. The determining consideration in a sound political system should not be the immediate interests of particular communities, but the ultimate good of the whole territory.*’ (Italics mine)

How truly every one of these words applies to this country ! The Donoughmore Commission came to a similar conclusion in respect of Ceylon. It felt convinced that communal representation

‘tends to keep communities apart, and to send communal representatives to the Council with the idea of defending particular interests instead of giving their special contribution to commonweal.’

The Commission, therefore, concluded that

‘only by its abolition will it be possible for the various diverse communities to develop together a true national unity.’

In India no such Commission has sat. Although the disastrous consequences of allowing communalism to intrude upon Indian public life are fully recognized, the principle which animates it is perpetuated with an obstinate determination. The late Mr Edwin Montagu was fully aware of its evils and very often referred to them in his *Diary*, but when its abolition was suggested to him by the late Sir V. P. Madhava Rao, giving reasons for doing so, he threw up his hands and declared : ‘Of course, that is quite true, but to suggest that we could get rid of it now seems to me to be impossible.’ (*An Indiarary Diary*, p. 68). Nationalist Muslims are no less conscious of the dangers of sectional representation and are never tardy in its condemnation. Three years after the Muslim deputation waited on Lord Minto, Sir Ali Imami declared that ‘separate electorate connotes negation of nationalism’. Maulana Mohammad Ali held the same view. ‘Freedom for India’, he said, ‘is not through separate electorates, though

being one of the authors of the separate electorates in 1906, I shall be the last to surrender them.' (Quoted in *Constituent Assembly and Indian Federation* by Y. G. Krishnamurti). Even Mr Jinnah had no illusions about the evils of separate electorates and actually moved a resolution at the 25th session of the National Congress in their condemnation.

But opposition to communal electorates, howsoever strongly expressed, no longer counted. The system had come to stay. Like the old man on Sindbad's shoulders, whom no amount of persuasion could induce to climb down, the system refused to leave the hospitable shores of India. It was an essential ingredient in the doctrine of counterpoise. It played its part even beyond the sanguine expectations of its originators. Almost every group and every section in the country began to feel vague stirrings about its own distinct entity and immediately launched forth a demand for its 'protection'. Protection against whom? Well, protection against everybody and, perhaps—against itself! The late Mr Montagu, who visited this country, was greatly amazed at these fissiparous tendencies.

'What strikes me as so astounding about these non-Brahmins,' he wrote, 'is that although they are vigorous enough to object to the influence of the Brahmins, they lie on their stomachs and appeal to the Government for help instead of fighting.' Whether it was at all necessary to 'fight' the Brahmins, a microscopic minority, is beside the point, but the above quotation indicates the prevailing temper in the country when even majorities wanted protection against minorities! Thus, everybody considered the posture of 'lying on their stomachs' much easier than standing on their legs. Describing the situation arising out of these tendencies, a somewhat irate author writes thus:

'Everything in India is a minority except the Hindus. The Moslems, the Sikhs, the Christians, the Parsis, the Anglo-Indians, the British community, the British merchants in India, and, above all, the Depressed Classes are minorities. Even labour, which is the numerical majority, is a "minority" and women, too, are a "minority". Very soon the Government will extend it to "eunuchs and concubines"! (The *Problem of Minorities* by Dr K. B. Krishna, p. 164)

Thus, the seed of dissension sown by Lord Minto was not thrown on barren soil. It has not only sprouted but grown into a giant banyan tree, threatening the very foundations of India's integrity. Since 1906 Muslim communalism has organized itself

under the banner of the Muslim League which has, barring a few bright interludes, ranged itself with the reactionary forces in the country. During these forty years it has developed an amazing appetite for concessions and we still see no end to its enormous hunger. Not content with crossing the path of nationalism, Muslim communalism has, at every stage of constitutional reforms, clamoured for preferential treatment in utter disproportion to the actual requirements of the Muslim community. During the three Indian Round Table Conferences it flew into the arms of British diehards, thus giving the Government a very plausible pretext for whittling down the scope of constitutional reforms.¹ Sir Samuel Hoare's performances during the passage of the India Bill which eventually flowered into the Government of India Act of 1935 were rendered possible by the anti-national attitude of Muslim communalism. Acceptance of office in the Provinces by the Congress gave a fillip to communalism which carried on a tireless campaign of misrepresentation against the Ministries. Trumpet up charges were rained upon them, although they showed utmost consideration to Muslim sentiments and Muslim interests.

The war has unmasked the communalists who stand fully exposed at the bar of world opinion. The following quotation from *The Unity of India* by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru judiciously sums up the role of communalism in India, and is a fitting summary of this Chapter. Thus says Pandit Nehru :

'Communalism began in India for a specified share in services and in representation in the legislatures. It has now developed into an openly anti-national, anti-democratic

1. Mr (now Sir) Edward Benthall, Commercial Representative of British interests in India at the R.T.C. played an important part in winning over Muslim communalists at the Conference on the side of reaction. In a confidential circular he revealed what happened behind the scenes at the R.T.C. Here is an extract from his circular : 'After the General Elections the Right wing of the Government made up its mind to break up the Conference and to fight the Congress. The Muslims, who do not want responsibility at the Centre, were delighted. The Government undoubtedly changed their policy and tried to get away with Provincial Autonomy, with a promise of Central reforms. We had made it our minds that the fight with the Congress was inevitable ; we felt and saw that the sooner it came the better, but we made up our minds that for a crushing success we should have all possible friends on our side. The Muslims were all right ; the Minorities Pact and Government's general attitude ensured that. So were the Princes and the Minorities.' (Quoted by Dr Pattabhi Sitaramayya in his book *The History of the Congress*, p. 75.)

Further on we come across the following significant passage: "The recent revelations in the Legislative Assembly about the demand of H. H. The Aga Khan to be made a Ruling Prince of some territory in India, as a reward for his services at the R.T.C., throw much lurid light on these transactions. In the light of these revelations and of what has been discussed in this Chapter one can easily realize how much truth there is in Mr. Amery's claims about British achievements in India."

THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

movement, demanding the partition of India. For a long while, it had no programme, constructive or otherwise. It lived on invective, violence and general offensiveness. It is amazing how it vulgarized our public life. It discovered that what it had valued most in the past—separate electorates—brought little good. In fact, they weakened minority groups. Then by the very force of the logic of hatred and separation that it pursued, it had to go to the extreme of demanding a partition of India. The medieval theory of religious groups constituting a political community, which collapsed before advancing nationalism in Europe, was revived. An idea similar to that of the Crusades, of Christendom *versus* Islam, suddenly appeared (it is said with British inspiration) in India. It was an astonishing throw-back. Whoever else benefited or suffered from it, it was clear that British imperialism was the gainer.' (p. 388)

3. THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

Since the outbreak of the war, profiteering and 'black market' have been flourishing remarkably well in India. These exactions are, however, not confined only to the market-place, but have also invaded our political life. From the point of view of sectional politics, the Muslim League is perhaps the greatest beneficiary of this war. Thanks to the prevailing unsettled political conditions in the country and thanks also to the astute leadership of Mr Jinnah, today the League has attained a status of considerable importance. But its importance is not such as to enthuse a nationalist. Normally, the efforts of any organization which aims at welding the ninety million Muslims of the country into a strong and compact community, pulsating with the vigour of a new consciousness, ought to be welcomed. The influence of a body capable of winning the loyalties of such a large section of the population should indeed be enormous and a national asset. But the League cannot claim the distinction of this achievement, not only because it has been unable to unite the Muslims, but because its separatist politics make such unity impracticable. The League's 'two-nations' theory and its consequent demand for Pakistan are calculated to do violence to the national sentiments of a large and sober section of the Muslim community.

It is necessary to remember that the League's extremism began a little less than two years before the outbreak of this war and that its proceedings, under the presidentship of Sir Wazir Hasan in April 1936, were refreshingly free from tirades against the Congress or the Hindus. In order to understand the League's tendency towards extremism it is, I suggest, profitable to stretch our gaze, in retrospect, across our own borders towards Europe. During these ten years the world has witnessed the growth of many obnoxious theories whose source and starting-point were Germany and Italy. The Dictators of these countries raised force and violence to the pedestal of virtue, and used them as arbiters for solving national and international disputes, thus dragging mankind by the collar into the present holocaust. They were indeed responsible for overturning many a cherished political and moral principle, and openly sneered at what constitute the decencies of life as the fads of the degenerate! While practising passionate and bellicose nationalism at home, they exerted their influence towards subverting the unity of other countries. Vague and vituperative accusations constituted their sole 'charges' to excuse their attacks upon their weak and defenceless neighbours. The power politics of the Fuehrer and the Duce gripped the imagination of many a reactionary leader in other countries, with any pretence to a following. The *Fuehrerprinzip* was too alluring not to be imitated by these little Hitlers and Mussolinis. What mattered if their politics were without power so long as they were free to employ the strategy of misrepresenting their 'enemies'?

It is, of course, impossible to say how much or how little the League's politics were influenced by the Nazi doctrine, but the general attitude of its leaders towards the Congress, the Hindus, the Nationalist Muslims, the non-Party leaders and, in fact, anybody who dared to differ from the League and its principles, bore a striking resemblance to the methods employed by the Dictators in the years preceding the war. Read what Dr Ambedkar, by no means a friend of the Congress, has to say on the subject. Thus says the learned Doctor!

'The Muslims are now speaking the language of Hitler claiming a place in the sun which Hitler has been claiming for Germany. For their demand for 50 per cent is nothing but a counterpart of the German claims for *Deutschland uber Alles* and *Lebensraum* for themselves, irrespective of what happens to other Minorities.' (*Thoughts on Pakistan*, p. 262)

The League's imitation of western power politics was reveal-

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY
THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

ed when the Congress formed Ministries in a majority of the Indian Provinces. The coming of Congress to power was indeed a strange and unheard-of event. The Congress, which had remained in perpetual opposition to the Government for more than fifty years, had now buried the hatchet and come forward to accept the responsibilities of Government. Very soon the Congress Ministers, most of whom were carefully chosen, began to show conspicuous ability in their new roles, and, barring a few incidents in a few Provinces, were on the whole able to work in close accord with the permanent officials of the Government. The League somehow felt itself aggrieved ; it also felt that it had been left high and dry. It was galling to its *amour-propre* that it was unable to run a Ministry of its own even in the Muslim-majority Provinces, without the help of non-Muslim elements. It is, of course, true that, out of a mistaken notion of technical difficulties, the Congress committed an error of judgment in omitting to take the League members into the cabinets of Hindu-majority Provinces. I had some occasions of discussing this omission with some of the ex-Congress Ministers and they have frankly admitted the mistake. Nevertheless, it is on record that Muslim interests were in no way overlooked or injured. The League had certainly no valid excuse for carrying on its raging and tearing campaign against the Congress over what was evidently an error of judgment, when it was possible to rectify the mistakes by a direct negotiation.

But the League was interested, not so much in securing Muslim interests, as to find a pretext for setting its propagandistic machinery in motion. Mr Jinnah took the earliest opportunity of doing so in 1937, when in his presidential address to the 26th session of the League held at Lucknow, he spoke thus :

‘The present leadership of the Congress, especially during the last ten years, has been responsible for alienating the Mussalmans of India more and more by pursuing a policy, which is exclusively Hindu, and since they have formed the Governments in six provinces where they are in majority, they have by their words, deeds and programme shown more—that the Mussalmans cannot expect any justice or fair-play at their hands. Wherever they are in a majority and wherever it suited them, they refused to co-operate with the Muslim League parties and demanded unconditional surrender and signing of their pledges.’

Further on he elaborated his complaints against the Congress in these words :

'Hindi is to be the national language of all-India and that *Bande Mataram* is to be the national song and is to be forced upon all. The Congress flag is to be obeyed and revered by all and sundry. On the very threshold of what little power and responsibility is given, the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus ; only the Congress masquerades under the name of nationalism, whereas the Hindu Mahasabha does not mince words.'

If you add to these grievances of Mr Jinnah, cow-killing, music before mosques, and the use of 'Shree' and other Sanskrit words, the catalogue of Congress-cum-Hindu atrocity to the Muslims would be complete !

It is reasonable to ask whether these charges were of such a serious import as to justify the outcry that the Congress was planning dark and sinister designs for the enslavement of the Muslim community. After all, flags and songs, howsoever intimately woven into the sentiments of a people, are not such formidable things as to dig an unbridgable gulf between the Congress and the League. If, indeed, there was the will for a compromise, no obstacle, however seemingly insuperable, would have stood in the way of national unity. Again and again did the Congress appeal to Mr Jinnah to mention specific instances in which Muslim interests were either ignored or wronged, but he did not condescend to anything so essentially base as to argue and to convince, for the technique of power politics is not of the law courts. Being again pressed in 1938 to put forward the League's demand, he presented the Congress with eleven points, which, besides incorporating the essential demands contained in his Fourteen Points, were supplemented by a number of new ones, some of which were of far-reaching significance. The most significant one among them was the demand that the Muslim League should be recognized as the 'one and only authoritative and representative organization of the Indian Muslims'.

The problem arising out of the League's demand to be recognized as the sole representative of the Indian Muslims was indeed great, for, had the Congress conceded this principle, it would have *ipso facto* acknowledged the communal character of its own organization and placed the Nationalist Muslims and other Muslim bodies in an untenable position. Nevertheless, undaunted by the difficulties of the situation, one respected Congress leader after another, including Mahatma Gandhi himself, 'waited upon' Mr Jinnah in the hope that some *modus vivendi* for

THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

an honourable settlement could be discovered. All such hopes were frustrated. In the meantime the war had intervened, and the negotiations, due to take place between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr Jinnah, were broken off, thanks to the foresight of the latter in realizing that the war would soon throw him up as an indispensable factor in the politics of the country.

The closing months of 1939 saw a rapid movement of events in our country. Lord Linlithgow's Government had committed India to the war without consulting Indian opinion. The Congress, which was then in office in a majority of provinces, called upon the British Government to define its war aims with reference to Indian freedom. But no definition of war aims was made, although British official spokesmen were busy telling the world that the war was being fought in vindication of freedom and democracy. When the desired declaration was not forthcoming the Congress Ministries resigned from all the seven Provinces. This was not a small matter, for a watchful world was critically observing the trend of events in this country. In official quarters a plea was needed for side-tracking the Indian issue and the bureaucracy anxiously looked about for helpers. It found a useful ally in the League which was becoming more and more truculent in its attacks upon the Congress. Indeed, Mr Jinnah was doing everything in his power to discredit the Congress and its leaders and, ignoring country-wide remonstrances, called upon his followers to observe 22nd December 1939 as the day of deliverance and thanks-giving 'as a mark of relief that the Congress Governments have ceased to function'! He tried to stave off popular disapprobation by claiming that the League was :

'not only carrying on a struggle for the Muslims but it maintains that all other important minorities must have the same sense of security and a place in the sun of India where they will enjoy the rights and privileges as free citizens and not be ground down by caste tyranny and caste rule.'

But when confronted with a direct question put to him by Mahatma Gandhi whether it was his intention to champion the cause of all the Minorities in India, he chided the Mahatma for his lack of perception and declared that

'this alignment shows that you have not appreciated the true significance of it.'

Its true significance was that it was simply 'a case of adversity bringing "strange bed-fellows" together'.

Mr Jinnah has again and again accused Gandhiji as a man

with no genius for realism. One wonders whether 'realism' consists in changing one's own ground as often as it suits one's convenience, as this example of Mr Jinnah's 'realism' shows. Evidently, he had no more use for non-Muslim Minorities when he felt that the higher regions of diplomacy were now within his reach. He was in fact rapidly out-growing his political convictions and feeling new stirrings from within about his impending greatness and the importance of his mission as a guide to the Muslims of India. It is unnecessary to regale my readers with many instances of Mr Jinnah's realism and diplomacy. But the manner in which he wriggled himself and the League out of the uncomfortable situation in which he and his party had found themselves, following the insistence of the Congress to verify the 'oppression' outcry, throws useful light upon his political manoeuvring. He adroitly evaded the issue by declaring that he had placed his complaints into the hands of the Viceroy, as if the Viceroy would care to institute enquiries into the actions of the Provincial Government! His reference to the Pirpur Report, alleged to contain an indictment of Congress Ministries, is, again, of a piece with his strategy. One wonders how many have seen and read this rare document.¹

1. The League's allegations against the Congress Ministries have been proved to be baseless. Apart from the open challenges of Sardar Patel and the emphatic declarations of all the Prime Ministers of 'Congress Provinces', there was the testimony of the Governors themselves. Sir Harry Haig, former Governor of the United Province, spoke on the subject in London, with Sir Hugh O'Neil, the then Under Secretary of State for India, in the chair. He said:

'In dealing with questions raising communal issues, the Ministers, in my judgment, normally acted with impartiality and a desire to do what was fair. The Congress administration on its constructive side has been inspired by enthusiasm, imagination and a considerable degree of idealism. It has, on the other hand, suffered from the defects of these qualities. There has been an impatience for quick results, the administrative machine was over-driven and decisions were sometimes hasty. But much has been achieved.'

The London Times—not a friend of the Congress—was constrained to write 'Congress Ministries in the Provinces where the party was lately in power appear to have been well-disposed to the Muslim community.'

Professor R. Coupland, who came to India to make an 'objective' study of the Indian situation but forgot his original intention when writing his booklet *The Cripps Mission*, was compelled to make the tardy confession that no specific grievances on behalf of the Muslims could be urged against the Congress Ministries. He says:

'An impartial investigator would come, I think, to the conclusion that many of these charges (by the League) were exaggerated or of little serious moment, that many of the incidents complained of were due to irresponsible members of the Congress party, and that the case against the Congress Governments as deliberately pursuing an anti-Muslim policy was certainly not proved.'

We could thus quote chapter and verse to disprove the 'atrocities' outcry of the Muslim League.

Mr Jinnah, as I say, discovered the usefulness of the war in precisely the same manner as the war discovered his importance. He was amazed at the sudden inflation of his political importance, and with refreshing candour gave expression to his surprise in the course of his presidential address to the Muslim League in March 1940. Here are his own words :

‘ . . . But after the war was declared the Viceroy naturally wanted help from the League. Suddenly there came a change in the attitude of the Viceroy towards me. I was treated on the same basis as Mr Gandhi. This was the severest blow to the Congress High Command. I was wonder-struck why all of a sudden I was promoted and given a place side by side with Mr Gandhi. The answer was the All-India Muslim League.’

Whether the answer was the All-India Muslim League or the Government’s necessity is an issue which we need not discuss here. On another occasion Mr Jinnah expressed a similar surprise at his sudden elevation. Let us hear his own words :

‘ It will be remembered that up to the time of the declaration of war, the Viceroy never thought of me but of Gandhi and Gandhi alone . . . I have been the leader of an important party in the legislature for a considerable time, larger than the one I have the honour to lead at present, the Muslim League Party in the Central Legislature. Yet the Viceroy never thought of me before.’¹

It was this realization of his new importance, combined with the consciousness of his mission in life, which impelled Mr Jinnah to persuade his party to accept Pakistan as its political objective. The well-known Lahore Resolution of March 1940 is, therefore, the gift of Mr Jinnah to the country.

Mr Jinnah did not allow the grass to grow under his feet in striving towards the Pakistan goal. And, as communalism can only thrive in an atmosphere of official encouragement, he appealed to the Government to concede his political demands to enable the League’s participation in the war efforts of the country. The Congress was now out of court, and who else could ‘ deliver the goods ’ on behalf of India if not the League ? In a statement issued on 27th May 1940 from the cool heights of Matheran, Mr Jinnah summed up the League’s position in these words :

‘ I think the British Government must realize that it is the

1. It is interesting to read what Prof. Edward Thompson says on the subject: ‘ The Moslem League has gained in the same fashion as Congress, since it became the Government practice to treat its President, Mr Jinnah, as a kind of Moslem Mahatma. ’ (*Enlist India for Freedom* I p. 23).

resistance of the Muslim League to the machinations of the Congress that has compelled the Congress leaders at this moment to make a virtue of necessity when they say that they do not want to embarrass the British Government and launch civil disobedience immediately but, keep the sword of Damocles hanging over Muslim India.

'It is up to the British Government to show trust in Muslim leadership—there are many ways of doing so—and as confident friends, seek our whole-hearted support. And we shall not fail them.'

This appeal could not be ignored. Lord Birkenhead's advice to Sir John Simon a decade ago to leave 'Jinnah high and dry' could no longer be practised in the immensely altered conditions of 1940. Nationalist opinion—and it did not comprise only the 'fire-eating' Congress 'radicals'—was pressing the British Government from all sides to fulfil its European war aims in India. It had sat too long on the fence not to provoke the suspicion of a critical world. Some gesture was necessary and the Declaration of August 1940 was the result.

It would have been unnecessary at this distance of time to discuss the August Declaration at length when it is like many others, already as dead as a door-nail. But a consideration of some of its aspects is rendered necessary by the fact that it fails fully to portray the then prevailing temper of political opinion in the country. The Congress position admitted of no doubt or speculation. It offered co-operation only on the positive condition that the Government consented to part with power forthwith. Other parties also made a similar demand, although they attached no conditions in the matter of assisting the war effort. But the League's attitude was fundamentally different. Outside its own goal of Pakistan, it was not interested in Indian freedom, either as an immediate or ultimate issue. In fact, it considered such freedom a snare and a danger to its own objective, which alone mattered to it more than anything else. It, therefore, concentrated all its energies in securing a categorical assurance from the Government that it alone represented the Muslim community and that no constitutional reforms should be initiated without its consent. A note submitted by it to the Viceroy on 1st June 1940 contains a lucid exposition of its position, and I give below a few relevant extracts from it in order to show how determined the League was in pursuit of its own sectional interests, unmindful of the consensus of opinion in the country. Here are the extracts :

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY
THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM DEMAND

'That no pronouncement or statement should be made by His Majesty's Government which would in any way militate against the basic and fundamental principles laid down by the Lahore Resolution of division of India and creating Muslim States in the north-west and eastern zones. . . .

'That His Majesty's Government must give a definite and categorical assurance to the Mussalmans of India that no interim or final scheme of constitution would be adopted by the British Government without the previous approval of Muslim India.'

'Muslim India', of course, means the 'Muslim League'. As regards Muslim representation in the Viceroy's Executive Council and in the War Council, the League demanded equal representation with the Hindus if the Congress came in, and a majority representation for the Muslims if it did not. The Note concluded with the demand that

'the representatives of the Mussalmans on the proposed War Council and the Executive Council of the Governor-General and the additional Non-official Advisers of the Governors, should be chosen by the Muslim League.'

In other words, the League demanded that (1) the British Government should acknowledge the League's political objective of Pakistan as the goal of all the Muslims of India, (2) that in the name of the entire Muslim community it should be invested with the right of sanctioning or withholding the future constitutional progress of India, (3) that the Congress should be treated, not as a national organization, but as a communal body like the League, (4) that on the basis of the two-nations theory, the League should be accorded the same representation as for the Hindus in the Viceroy's Executive Council and other representative bodies, and (5) that Muslim representatives in these Councils should be its nominees, thus confirming its claim that it alone was the accredited spokesman of the Muslims of India.

It is a small matter for consideration that the Viceroy did not concede some of the minor demands of the League, but in so far as the constitutional issues were concerned, there was perfect reciprocity between the League and the Government, as was exemplified by the August Declaration. Here is an extract from the Declaration on the eternal theme of minorities :—

'The first is to the position of minorities in relation to any future constitutional scheme. It has already been made clear that my declaration of last October does not exclude

examination of any part either of the Act of 1935 or of the policy and plans on which it is based. His Majesty's Government's concern that full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision has also been brought out. That remains the position of His Majesty's Government. It goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities for the peace and welfare of India to any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life. Nor could they be parties to the coercion of such elements into submission to such a government.'

Yet this Declaration, which gave the power of veto to a party pledged to the subversion of India's unity, was acclaimed as a document worthy of greater consideration by Indians than even the Atlantic Charter! The League rejoiced over the Declaration and welcomed it with both hands at a meeting of its Working Committee held on 2nd September 1940. It characterized the pronouncements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State as

'a considerable progressive advance towards the approach of the point of view and the position taken up by the All-India Muslim League on behalf of the Muslim India regarding the problem of the future constitution of India, and the Committee also note with satisfaction that His Majesty's Government have, on the whole, practically met the demand of the Muslim League for a clear assurance to the effect that no future constitution, interim or final, should be adopted by the British Government without their approval and consent.'

While the League had thus every reason to applaud the Declaration, all sections of progressive opinion in the country roundly condemned it. The non-Party leaders, composed of moderate elder statesmen, did not, however, stop with an expression of dissatisfaction with the Government's August offer. They foregathered at Bombay in March 1941 under the presidency of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and put forward an eminently reasonable proposal, which, while calculated to end the deadlock, did not necessitate any fundamental alterations to the Act of 1935. The Bombay Conference made two recommendations, one for the duration of the war and another for the future. The interim arrangement envisaged the expansion of the Governor-General's Executive Council, consisting of Indian members drawn from important elements in India's public life. These members were required to be placed in charge of all portfolios, 'including the

THE WAR AND THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

ital ones of Finance and Defence'. As for the future, the Conference suggested that the British Government should make a declaration, simultaneously with the reconstruction of the Government, that 'within a specified time limit after the conclusion of the war, India will enjoy the same measure of freedom as will be enjoyed by Britain and the Dominions.'

The redoubtable Mr Amery, in the plenitude of his wisdom, refused to look at this proposal because, as he explained in the House of Commons on 22nd April 1941, 'Mr Jinnah, the leader of the Moslem League, has since repudiated the scheme as being on "entirely wrong lines" and a trap into which Sir Tej has been led by "Congress wirepullers".' (*India and Freedom*, p. 82) This is how the Secretary of State turned down the moderate counsel of leaders with an unimpeachable record of wide and varied experience of Indian public life. Mr Jinnah, I daresay, must have been greatly flattered at the rapid growth of his negative importance. The Declaration of August 1940 had conferred on him the right of veto by implication, but Mr Amery tore off all this camouflage and openly declared Mr Jinnah as the sole arbiter of India's destiny. Mr Jinnah in his turn was averse to any scheme which placed national freedom above his sectional politics.

It is amazing to realize how the League and its leaders have lowered the standards of public controversies. Mr Jinnah's unspeakable effusions against Gandhiji, to whom India owes an eternal debt of gratitude for, to use the late Mr Gokhale's phrase, moulding heroes out of clay, against Maulana Azad, a great Muslim divine and patriot, against Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, from whom it is impossible to withhold our admiration for his matchless sacrifices, against Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, a great and respected moderate statesman, against Dr M. R. Jayakar, another non-partisan leader of independent judgment, against the illustrious group of non-Party leaders, and, in fact, against all those who do not subscribe to his new-fangled two-nations theory are too well-known to be mentioned in detail. Yet it is into the hands of this man that Mr Amery has sought by word and deed to resign the fate of India.

It is unnecessary to discuss here how the leaders of the Bombay Conference met the Charges levelled against them by Mr Jinnah in his presidential address to the All-India Muslim League Conference held at Madras in April 1941. But it is worth noting that they took serious exception to Mr Amery's favourable reactions to the League leader's outbursts.

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They declared that the Indian question should no longer be relegated to the background as an inconsequential issue, or one to be left as a source of conflict between India and Great Britain, but that it needed to be embodied in the war and peace aims of the United Nations. Mr Willkie considered that this country's freedom was as much a matter of vital concern to America as it was to Great Britain. Dr Lin Yutang, the well-known Chinese philosopher, correctly appraised the magnitude of the Indian problem and wrote a remarkably outspoken article in the *New York Times* in which he made the following observations :

'The role of India is coming to the fore and this fact must be faced, or we might yet lose the war in Asia. A tremendous difference in the war morale of the Asiatics, particularly in the war efforts of India, hangs upon the vision of the leaders of the Western democracies and their ability to tell the Indians, in more convincing terms than vague promises and unctuous sops of praise, that they have something deep and elementary to fight for. Real creative statesmanship should see this point. No side-stepping of this issue of India's freedom will avail . . . The position of India in this war is similar to that of Eire. Both India and Ireland dislike and fear the Nazis, yet with both the war is not yet a popular war. The only difference is that Eire is still smarting after she has regained her freedom, whereas India is smarting because she hasn't got it. India's demand for freedom has been pool-poohed by both Chamberlain and Churchill and side-stepped as a trivial, inconsequential issue. This is in spite of the fact that Churchill knows India today possesses the leadership and unity and party organization as vital as China's that will change the entire picture of India's war efforts, once she is granted freedom.'

Perhaps this continual pressure from world opinion, combined with the very real Japanese menace to India, persuaded the British War Cabinet to reconsider the situation ; in any case they sent Sir Stafford Cripps to this country with a draft proposal for solving the Indian constitutional problem. Sir Stafford Cripps arrived in this country on 23rd March 1942. I propose to deal with his Mission in some detail as it has a direct bearing on the Pakistan controversy.

For many reasons Sir Stafford Cripps was accorded a good reception in this country. In the first place, he was well-known as

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

a friend of India's freedom and was intimately associated with Congress stalwarts like Pandit Nehru. Secondly, it was believed that his pronounced socialist leanings would have insured against his becoming the emissary of British diehardism. As a well-known intellectual, with a noted independence of character, and as one of the outstanding personalities of his country, with supreme achievement to his credit of having successfully negotiated with Russia, it was confidently hoped that he had brought proposals of a really liberal character. Thirdly, it was hoped that the pressure of public opinion in India and in the countries of the United Nations combined with the increasing danger to the safety of this country, had exercised a salutary effect upon the British Government and that, in consequence, its constitutional proposals would be considerably more liberal than all its previous offers. Lastly, Sir Stafford's first broadcast speech at Delhi and his interview to the Press were calculated to induce the belief that the British Government had at last decided to open a new chapter in the Indo-British relations by conceding freedom to India outright.

Unfortunately, however, all these high expectations proved to be illusory. Sir Stafford did not show himself to be such a good friend of India when it came to the question of parting with power. Notwithstanding his denials to the contrary, there is no doubt from his utterances after the failure of his mission that he had completely played into the hands of reactionaries. But we are not concerned here with the issue as to how and why Sir Stafford could persuade himself to lend his support to a scheme bristling with grave defects. That, after all, is a small matter. What is most important, however, is the question as to how the British Cabinet's offer differed from the previous declarations of the Government. The inclusion of the clause relating to the future independent status of India in the draft proposals was of no consequence, for it must have been evident that being unsatisfactory in other respects, the proposals had hardly any chance of winning the acceptance of India. This belief is further strengthened by the manner in which the rejection of the Cripps offer was exploited by responsible British spokesmen. In his broadcast speech on the night of 26th July 1942 Sir Stafford Cripps told the American people that he travelled 20,000 miles to India to offer freedom to the Indian people which, to his great sorrow, they rejected. We do not know how many Americans swallowed this story and how many of them concluded that Indians were a suicidal people, incapable of appreciating the value of freedom. But, assuming that

is one-sided propaganda had its effect upon the outside world, there is no doubt that there are still millions of discerning men who can study the Cripps offer for themselves and arrive at the correct conclusion as to why India rejected it. If indeed there was a genuine desire on the part of the British Government for granting freedom to India, it was unnecessary to draw up a scheme capable of provoking bitter controversies. There was the Declaration of August 1940, albeit unsatisfactory, which committed the Government to a particular line of policy as regards the responsibility of Indians for framing a constitution of their own. It is pertinent to ask why the Government found it necessary to abandon this procedure and present India with fresh proposals for acceptance or rejection. There was no dearth of constitutional proposals put forward by Indians themselves. The Congress, the Liberals, the non-Party leaders, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Nationalist Muslims had made their own contributions to the solution of the problem, and it would have been more helpful had the suggestions put forward by any one of these parties been accepted. Or there was the simple method of declaring the independent status of India, to take effect after the war, and of inviting Indians to assume the responsibility of framing the constitution of their country according to their own needs. The Government could have settled doubts as regards its intentions for the future by calling upon Indians to form an interim national Government for the duration of the war—a Government representing all the principal elements in the country, and enjoying unfettered powers in respect of Defence and Finance.

The British Government did not adopt any one of the procedures herein outlined, but formulated proposals according to its own conceptions of Indian requirements. What these conceptions were has been fully revealed in the Cripps offer. It is not necessary to examine the offer at length; this has already been done by those who actually participated in the talks. But it is worth while to note a few points here. The Declaration, which Sir Stafford Cripps had brought, concentrated its attention almost entirely upon post-war India. No provision whatsoever was made as regards the present. The only reference which the declaration made to the present was in the nature of an exhortation to Indians to make all-out efforts for winning the war in the hope of getting freedom in future through a multiplicity of 'unions' created out of an organically united India. But Indian leaders went to Sir Stafford Cripps in the belief that, apart from the cold and cal-

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

culated words of the Declaration, he had perhaps something more substantial to offer. They were not wholly wrong in coming to this conclusion, for Sir Stafford's own utterances during the early days of his visit encouraged the belief that the British Government was as determined to settle the Indian question as the Indians themselves. Moreover, eminent and responsible leaders, like Maulana Azad and Pandit Nehru, were led to hold the view even after their repeated interviews and until the actual break-down of the talks, that the negotiations definitely envisaged the formation of a national Government in the real sense of the term. It is not possible for us to account for the amazing *volte face* of Sir Stafford, but there is no doubt that the sudden change in his attitude was primarily responsible for the failure of his Mission. This fact has been made abundantly clear both by Maulana Azad and Pandit Nehru and substantiated by Mr Asaf Ali.

'It seems', wrote the Congress President to Sir Stafford Cripps in the course of their correspondence, 'that there has been a progressive deterioration in the British Government's attitude as our negotiations proceeded. What we were told in our very first talk with you is now denied or explained away. You told me that there would be a National Government, which would function as a cabinet and that the position of Viceroy would be analogous to that of the King in England *vis a vis* his Cabinet. In regard to Indian defence, you told me that you were surprised that no one had so far mentioned this important matter and that the practical course was to have this attached or incorporated with the Dominion Office. The whole of this picture which you sketched before us has now been completely shattered by what you told us during our last interview.'

Formation of a national Government was not the only promise which Sir Stafford made to Maulana Azad, for in his address to the A.I.C.C. on 29th April 1942 the Congress President revealed that Sir Stafford Cripps had 'made it plain that the India Office as such would not continue.' Nor was the Maulana alone in getting these impressions. Here is what Pandit Nehru says :

'And we were really astonished that all the premises and assumptions which we had had in our mind for ten days and which we had been arguing, had no foundation.'

This 'going back' on the part of Sir Stafford covered every field of promises which he had made to the Congress leaders in his talks with them, and it became increasingly evident that through him

the British Government was determined to break off the negotiations. Defence proved to be the last straw.

Such was the contribution of Sir Stafford Cripps to the present, but the scheme envisaged for the future was open to an even more serious objection. The offer promised freedom to India after the war ('a post-dated cheque'), but at the cost of the country's unity. The Declaration of August 1940 had identified the Muslim League with the 'large and powerful elements in India's national life'. This policy found its culmination in the Cripps offer, which not only put the stamp of approval on the representative character of the League, but went a very big step forward in conceding its demand for breaking up the unity of the country. Clause (c) of the offer reads thus :

'His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to:—

- (i) The right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new Constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides.

With such non-acceding provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution giving them the same full status as the Indian Union and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down.'

Where was the necessity for such a provision? Did it not amount to an acceptance of the League's demand for disrupting the unity of the country? I repeat that the strength or the weakness of the League is an irrelevant issue before the over-riding consideration of safe-guarding the interests of the country as a whole. India is of continental size with a teeming population. A Central Government is indispensable to preserve and protect the diverse interests of her people. To dispense with this vital necessity in deference to the fiat of a party leader is to plunge the country into eternal misery. As Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru very rightly points out, it would be an act of blackest treachery if the British Government sought to implement the Pakistan demand.

But concession to separatism was not the only objectionable feature of the Cripps offer. It aimed at preserving the *status quo* in the States, comprising a good third of the country with a population of 93,189,233 people. These ninety million people were given no place whatsoever in the picture and were required to abide by the decisions of their rulers on such a vital issue as their future

place in an all-India polity. Their apprehension on the implications of the Cripps offer were expressed by the Congress Working Committee in its resolution of April 1942. The offer, if accepted, would have, according to the resolution, led to the States becoming :

‘barriers to the growth of Indian freedom, enclaves where foreign authority still prevails and where the possibility of maintaining foreign armed forces has been stated to be a likely contingency and a perpetual menace to the freedom of the people of the States as well as of the rest of India.’

These are the salient features of the Cripps offer and those who believe that India committed the folly of rejecting it would do well to read what *The Statesman* says on the subject :

‘So long as the India Office and the Government of India draft the proposals, no emissary can succeed, and no effective effort will be made to cope with the hourly increasing danger to this country. A clean sweep of personalities is needed. It is no use trying to carry on with the men who have wielded authority in the past. They did well, according to their lights. But their lights are dim. Sir Stafford Cripps has been made a dupe, but the scheme will over-reach itself. . . . It is folly so colossal as to be even too sublime to suggest that a foreign Government, running a war on cumbrous British methods, without the active sympathy of the people, can check the infiltrating ants. We regret greatly the announcement of Sir Stafford’s immediate departure. If the diehard object is that he should return discredited, that will not be achieved. Events can only bring discredit on the reactionaries.’

Thus, the much-heralded Cripps offer came to nothing and only resulted in once again plunging the country into the slough of despond. Whoever else regretted the failure of the mission, the Muslim League had no reason to share the regret because did not the offer once more confirm, if indeed any further confirmation was at all needed after the performances of Mr Amery, that there would be no freedom for India unless the country was split into two or more ‘unions’?

In the months following the withdrawal of the Cripps offer several earnest efforts were made to solve the Indian deadlock but with no success. In August 1942 the Congress deliberated at Bombay on the ways and means of enforcing the national demand and before it could make up its mind as to its future course of action, it found itself in prison. The field was once more left free

for the League to carry on its crusade on behalf of Pakistan, and so certain did Mr Jinnah feel about the nearness of his goal that he gave expression to his optimism in a speech at Delhi on 25th December 1942. He said :

‘We will realize our goal earlier than we anticipated and there will be no greater happiness to me than to see Pakistan established during my lifetime.’

It is a strange coincidence that Mahatma Gandhi also entertains the belief that he will see India free before he dies. Perhaps this explains the implacable antagonism of Mr Jinnah to Gandhiji, for would not his life's ambition become frustrated if the Mahatma stole a march over him ? This, in a nutshell, explains the tragedy of Indian politics.

The imprisonment of the rank and file of the Congress in 1942 created a great stir in the country, leading to grave disorders for many months. Mahatma Gandhi was sorely distressed at the development of events, and in order to bring about an understanding between the Congress and the Government entered into a long drawn out correspondence with the latter from his place of detention. Having failed in his attempts, he decided to undergo a twenty-one-day fast, which he commenced on 10th February 1943. His advanced age and the delicate state of his health did not admit of such an ordeal being undertaken. His life was clearly in danger. Nine days after the fast was begun, an All-Party Leaders' Conference was held at Delhi, with a view to calling upon the Government to release the Mahatma before it was too late. Every community and every shade of opinion was represented at the Conference, but Mr Jinnah refused to attend. Replying to the invitation, he said :

‘The situation arising out of Mr Gandhi's fast is really a matter for the Hindu leaders to consider and advise him accordingly.’

Evidently, being a ‘citizen’ of another ‘nation’, Mr Jinnah did not feel called upon to join in the country's appeal to the civilized conscience of the world for saving the Mahatma's life. But the representative character of the Conference was not lost by his refusal to attend. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru entered an eloquent and earnest plea for the release of Gandhiji.

‘We make on this occasion,’ he declared at the Conference, ‘our appeal to the civilized conscience of Great Britain and United Powers and we do say that if it is intended that this country shall settle down to constructive work, then it is

absolutely necessary that Mr Gandhi should be released.' The appeal failed to reach the 'civilized conscience' of those who could have released Gandhiji. The Mahatma, however, ran the full course of his ordeal and came out unscathed.

Soon after his recovery from the effects of his February fast, Gandhiji tried, in May, to contact the League leader, who had declared in a speech on 24th April that if the Mahatma chose to write to him, the Government dared not stop the letter. The letter was, however, stopped. Confronted with this situation, Mr Jinnah wriggled himself out of it by declaring that :

'this letter of Mr Gandhi can only be construed as a move on his part to embroil the Muslim League to come into clash with the British Government solely for the purpose of helping his release so that he would be free to do what he pleases thereafter' !

It is an irony of fate that it is with this very leader, who has not even the charity of conceding purity of motives in others, however eminent in the eyes of the world, that Mahatma Gandhi, since his release in June 1944 and Mr C. Rajagopalachari are trying to come to terms.

By conceding the Pakistan principle Gandhiji has retraced from the position all along taken up by him. Does he subscribe to the two-nations theory of Mr Jinnah? Has not the League leader declared and repeated *ad nauseam* that Gandhiji is a Hindu first and last? Is the Mahatma content to remain a mere Hindu? When in 1926 Rev. John R. Mott, one of the greatest evangelists, said to Gandhiji : 'The world looks on you as a front-rank prophet, conscience-initiator and warrior', was this remarkable tribute paid to him as a Hindu or as a great Indian and an internationalist? Again, why did the famous Japanese evangelist Kagawa, who visited Gandhiji in 1939 kneel to salute him? The answer is obvious. No, we cannot reconcile ourselves to Gandhiji's abdication of his own position and his surrender of a cherished principle, even if it be in the interests of higher politics. The League has frustrated India's aspirations during the most crucial period in her history. So long as it is in alliance with reaction, as I hope this chapter has conclusively shown, no nationalist should have any truck with it.

4. WHAT IS THIS TWO-NATIONS THEORY ?

What is this 'Pakistan' which has been for some years past evoking such a complex of feelings and emotions in India ? Who invented the idea of a separate Muslim State and who gave it its present name ? Lastly, what is its *raison d'être* and what are its implications ? Thanks to the impetus given to the League's objective by Mahatma Gandhi's recent support to it, these questions have now assumed a special significance and a special importance. We must therefore, try to find answers to them.

The origin of the Pakistan idea is somewhat lost in the mists of uncertainty and it is, in consequence, not easy to trace its authorship to any precise individual or to fix a definite date as to when it first took its shape. Mr Jinnah has, however, tried to foist the parentage of the name on his 'Hindu and British friends'. In his presidential address to the Muslim League Conference held at Delhi on 24th April 1943, he maladroitly told his admiring and gullible audience :

"When we passed the Lahore resolution, we did not use the word Pakistan at all. Who gave us this word ? (Shouts of "Hindus") Let me tell you, it is their folly. They started damning this on the ground that it was Pakistan. They foisted this word upon us and they talked of Pan-Islamism. We ourselves went on for a long time using the phrase 'the Lahore Resolution popularly known as Pakistan'. But how long are we to have this long phrase ? I say to Hindu and British friends, "We thank you for giving us one word."

Thus the wicked Hindus, the convenient target of Mr Jinnah's attack, were the arch-inventors of the word 'Pakistan' ! I daresay, they must be grateful to him for not fathering the idea itself on them, although one should not be surprised if he does so one of these days ! But his memory, like the proverbial memory of the public, appears to be short, for in March 1940 he had himself declared that Sir Mohd. Iqbal was the animator of the Pakistan idea. This statement finds confirmation in the book *India's Problem of Her Constitution*, which is authoritative, being a collection of his own articles and those of his colleagues on the subject of Pakistan. We gather from this book that the idea of Pakistan 'originated in the brain of the late Hazrat Allama Iqbal'. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* says that in 1933 Mr C. Rahmat Ali, M.A.,

LL.B., gave this name to the Muslim-majority provinces—a view which is accepted by Dr Ambedkar in his book *Thoughts on Pakistan*. But whether the origin of the word is to be traced to the poetic imagination of the 'Poet of Islam' or to the forensic insight of Mr Rahmat Ali is not such a vital point as to justify a controversy, but it is undeniable that the movement for a separate Muslim state is much older. Professor A. B. Keith noticed separatist tendencies among the Muslims as early as in 1919, following the introduction of the Montford Reforms and drew attention to them in his book *A Constitutional History of India* in these words :

'Among the Muslims also there was propagated a wild but not negligible scheme for the creation of a Muslim State based on Afghanistan and embracing all those north-western areas where the faith is strong. Such a state would inevitably form a permanent source of danger to India.' (p. 287)

Thoughtful and discerning persons among the Muslims realized the disastrous consequences of allowing religious fervour to overwhelm reason and they consequently exerted a sobering influence upon men with separatist tendencies. The present war has, however, given a new turn to the movement and all the credit for transforming what was hitherto a vague idea into a live issue is due to Mr M. A. Jinnah.

The whole *raison d'être* of the Pakistan demand is, as we understand it from the speeches of the League leader and his adherents, based upon the two-nations theory. Are the Muslims a separate nation and if they are, what is a 'nation'? Is it a personal matter, resting upon subjective impressions, or is it a mystical political concept, susceptible of convenient interpretation and definition? In his presidential address to the Muslim League in March 1940 Mr Jinnah declared that 'Mussalmans are a nation according to any definition of a nation'. This statement simply makes an assertion without defining how the Indian Muslims are a separate nation. Perhaps he would have made a useful contribution to the controversy had he shown in what respects the Muslims are apart from the rest of the Indian population and according to what standards of appraisal they are entitled to the consideration due to a separate nation. It is not easy to define what constitutes a nation,—a difficulty which has been freely admitted by all eminent authorities. It is indeed easier to say what does not constitute a nation. Nevertheless, the following definitions by well-known modern writers and statesmen will be read with

advantage in connexion with the discussion of the two-nations theory put forward by the League :

‘What are the elements which constitute a distinct nation ?’ asked Mr Lloyd George in a broadcast speech on the nationalism of Wales, and answered thus : ‘There is racial identity. There is common history and tradition. There is geographical situation, government. Most distinctive of all, there is a separate language. But no country on earth can claim a hundred per cent. of marks under each of these tests.’

‘It is not easy to say what constitutes a nation,’ wrote the late Mr Ramsay Muir in his book *Civilization and Liberty* (p. 58). ‘Race certainly has very little to do with it, though once a nation is established in unity, it is prone to attribute its unity and character to race. But all the peoples of Europe are of very mixed races ; and the countries in which national feeling has been strongest and most enduring, such as England and France, are among the most mixed. The possession of a clearly defined territory, with characteristic landscapes which win the affection of its people, is an important factor. Unity of language is even more important ; yet it is not essential, as the cases of Scotland and Switzerland show. A common body of law, a long-established and accepted system of government, and a common tradition, are perhaps the most important factors.’

Professor Harold Laski says : ‘Nationalism implies the sense of a special unity which marks off those who share in it from the rest of mankind.’

While, therefore, a nation may be broadly defined as a body of people united by a corporate sentiment, related to a definite home country, it is impossible to claim finality for any particular definition in a matter which has such wide-spread spiritual, emotional and physical ramifications. Nevertheless, the above definitions may be taken as a starting-point for our discussion. According to them, the criteria for determining the distinctive characteristics of a people are, broadly speaking, race, language, religion, culture and love of one’s country, although, as Mr Lloyd George points out, it is impossible to find a nation possessing all these attributes to the fullest extent. The question we have to ask ourselves and answer is whether, judged by these standards, the Muslims of India are a separate nation, having nothing in common with the rest of the population.

Considered from the racial point of view, the Indian Muslims

are *not* a separate nation. Mankind has ridden the racial theory to death and it is time that it is given a decent burial. We in India, at any rate, have no need to resurrect it! The Indian population is an amalgam of many races and it is from this mixed stock that the various religious communities are derived. Here, as everywhere, racial syncretism has been in continual operation from a period long before the history of man was begun to be written and has produced a number of distinct ethnic types such as the Punjabis, the Sindhis, the Gujeratis, the Marathas, the Bengalis and the Dravidians. But this crystallization has not and could not proceed along religious lines, thus making it impossible for any facile line of demarcation being drawn between the various religious communities on a racial basis. Religion, howsoever strong its unifying influence, cannot in itself promote that community of feeling and of interests between men from different parts as ethnic kinship, environment, economic and social interdependence produce. It is for this reason, notwithstanding all the propaganda now being carried on in the name of religion, that we find greater affinities existing between, for example, a Punjabi Hindu and a Punjabi Muslim than exist between their respective co-religionists from other parts of the country. These are plain facts, evident to the most casual observer of the Indian population. Commenting on the illogicality of Mr Jinnah's two-nations theory, an Anglo-Indian paper was constrained to write thus :

'Ethnically there is no justification for regarding Hindus and Muslims in India as separate nations. Religion or numerical strength in itself does not make a nation. What racial affinity is there between a Muslim from the Konkan and a Muslim from the Punjab? Racial divisions exist in India,—and on a large scale,—but these ethnic cleavages, as the most cursory examination demonstrates, do not run along religious boundaries. There is no more a Muslim nation in India than there is a Hindu nation.'

There is, however, a tendency among certain Hindus and Muslims to trace their origin to some mythical and forgotten ancestor. Sentimental Hindus believe that they are derived from the Aryan stock, despite the fact that a series of racial admixtures have taken place since the Aryan times. Moreover, doubts have begun to be entertained whether the Aryans were a race or a culture!¹

1. Discussing this question in his article *What is this Pure Race Theory?*, published in the *Picture Post* for October 1938, Mr Edward Hulton maintains

WHAT IS THIS TWO-NATIONS THEORY

If the Hindus have this 'Aryan' obsession, certain Muslims exhibit a strange weakness for foreign descent ! It would gladden their hearts if their lineal descent is traced to, say, the House of Timur or to some foreign illustrious Muslim figure or dynasty, although they might be aware that their very profession of Islamic faith is perhaps two or three generations old. Mr Montagu reveals in his *Diary* how the Begum of Bhopal explained to him that 'she was not an Indian but a Pathan, although she and her family had been in India for 200 years before the British occupation.' We need not take seriously the claims of the Princes and Princesses of India, some of whom ask us in all seriousness to believe that they are the descendants of the sun and the moon ! But we cannot lightly dismiss what purport to be the considered opinions of responsible men, who claim to be leaders of their community, when they propound new and strange theories as regards the origin of the Indian Muslims. Are these Muslims derived from races outside India, or is their descent so old as to be traced back to some dim, distant and unnoted period of history ? We know that the first Muslims who came to this country were but a handful and that, despite their repeated invasions, their numbers were not such as to have any decisive influence upon the racial composition of the Indian population. History does not record of any Muslim immigrations like those of the Aryans and other races. It is interesting to record here the views of Professor A. B. Keith on the subject. He says :

'It must be remembered that perhaps five-sixths of the Muslims of India are the descendants of converted Hindus.'

(*A Constitutional History of India*, p. 287)

Thus, the Muslims of India are derived overwhelmingly from the Hindu population, and there is no warrant whatsoever for the assumption that as a race they are apart from the majority community.

It is interesting to note in this connexion that most of the shining lights of the Muslim League cannot trace their Islamic descent beyond two or three generations. The late Sir Mohd. Iqbal, the 'animator' of the Pakistan idea and 'Poet of Islam', belonged to a family of Kashmiri Brahmins who had embraced Islam some

that the word 'race' is not a genuine scientific term but that it has been employed to 'bolster up strange emotions and blind prejudices'. Refuting the 'Aryan race' theory, he writes thus : 'There certainly never was an Aryan race. This curious idea was first popularized in the 19th century by the very eminent Professor Max Müller. But after thirty years he himself admitted that the "Aryans" were only a "culture", that is, a type or brand of civilization.'

generations ago, thus, as Sir Abdul Qadir says, 'combining in his person some of the best characteristics of his race as well as of the religion adopted by his fore-fathers'. The late Sir Abdulla Haroon, who was Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the League, said in a statement dated 3rd April 1940 that no less a person than Mr Jinnah comes from a Bhatia family, that the late Sir Sikander Hayat Khan's ancestors were Rajputs and that he himself traced his ancestry to a Lohana Hindu family.

It is strange that men, who have not even a drop of foreign blood coursing their veins—as if this is a qualification—should make fantastic assertions as regards the origin of their community. However much they may dislike the fact, the League leaders must confess that the Muslims of India are derived from the same racial stock as the Hindus.

From the linguistic point of view also there is no justification whatsoever for the two-nations theory. In India many languages are spoken and there is not one which is spoken exclusively by all the Muslims in the country and cultivated as their *lingua franca*. In fact, they speak all the Indian languages and have enriched them by their own valuable contributions. The Hindi-Urdu controversy is merely propagandistic, for apart from the fact that these two languages are in many respects similar, they are spoken only by a section of the Indian population. The Muslims cannot discard the languages of their areas because they are their mother-tongues. Whatever emotional attachment they might feel for Urdu, which they can neither speak nor understand, it is incapable of replacing their provincial languages. Take the case of Bengali, which is the common language of the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal. This is an important fact because more than 35 per cent. of the Muslim population of India is drawn from Bengal. Same is the case with Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada, Telugu and Tamil. It is well-known that Gujarati is the home language of Mr Jinnah who feels more at home when speaking it than when he expresses himself through the medium of Urdu. Linguistically, therefore, the Hindus and Muslims are one.

Reserving the discussion of the religious question till the last, let us now consider whether culturally the Muslims are apart from the other communities in the country. Now, the term 'culture' like the word 'nation' is too abstract and elusive to be compressed within a precise definition. Without going deep into this question, it is a commonsense point of view to say that, having lived with the Hindus for more than eight hundred years and having shared

with them the joys and sorrows of life during this long stretch of time, the Muslims cannot have a culture which is *either* alien or antagonistic to Indian culture. It is in fact wrong to say that in this country there is any culture other than Indian. There is no doubt that the various communities inhabiting this land have made their own distinctive contribution to its enrichment, but it is wrong on that account to conclude that each of these communities has an exclusive culture of its own. It is for this reason that I maintain that there is no more a Muslim culture than there is a Hindu culture. But I would not dispute with anyone, should he contend that the Muslims have a distinct culture of their own, but I do maintain that this fact does not and cannot reinforce the two-nations theory. Apart from the fact that the Muslim culture has exercised a profound influence upon Indian art, architecture, music and literature and has itself been similarly influenced, it is one of which every Indian is legitimately proud. Is there anyone who is not stirred to the very depths of his soul when he beholds the immortal Taj? The culture of the Indian Muslims is sure of transmission to posterity, and the fact that it has suffered no discouragement or danger during the many centuries of its existence in this country should set at rest all doubts, if genuinely felt, as regards its future.

The next question which we must consider is whether the Muslims of India regard themselves as the nationals of this country. Elsewhere I have written about the extraordinary geographical unity of India. This unity has exercised a profound influence upon the minds of the people of this country from the days of the earliest invaders and immigrants. The process of assimilation and absorption of the diverse elements that poured into this country from time to time and of rooting them to the soil is the distinctive feature of Indian history. Take the case of the Moghuls. They came as conquerors but remained as the sons of the land. This was the tradition of India from times immemorial till the advent of the British who, despite two hundred years of their connexion with this country, are still birds of passage and take pride in it. Professor Rushbrook-Williams explains the British point of view in these words :

‘Modern Indian critics of British rule in India take it as a grievance that we have never attempted to make our home in the country ; that we have never established ourselves, as did all previous invaders, as a people at one with, if superior to, the people over whom we rule ; that we have clung fast to

our own land and have not been content to see ourselves just one more racial element in the ethnological hotch-potch of India. The critics have failed to perceive that in this has lain not only the very essence of our power, but also one potent cause of the emergence of the modern Indian sentiment of nationalism, which, in opposition to a Western culture perpetually rejuvenated from its source, and thus unblurred by Indian conditions, has begun to transcend the age-long separatism of the races and languages for which India is a home.' (*What About India?* p. 39)

The Muslims did not and cannot follow this example. There are overwhelming reasons for their regarding India as their mother country. There is no comparison whatsoever between the British and Muslim conquest of India. The interest of our present rulers in this country was and still is that of foreigners, but the Muslims came to stay. They came in small numbers and swelled their numerical strength to the present formidable figure, partly by birth and largely by proselytization. They are thus an integral part of the Indian population. Living in the country for now over eight hundred years, their political and economic interests have not only become firmly rooted in the Indian soil but are inextricably interwoven with those of other communities. These interests cannot any longer be separated without doing serious violence to them. For these reasons, the Muslims are not unwanted aliens. Today, as in the past, they draw their inspiration, sustenance and strength from the same source as other Indians. India's mountains and hills, her rivers and brooks, her forests and pastures, her art and literature, her wealth and poverty, in fact everything which she can give are as much theirs by right as of the other communities. No sensible Indian can doubt or dispute this fact, and the nationalists have always assured doubting Muslims to this effect.

Secondly, unlike the British in India, whose gaze is always stretched towards Great Britain, the Muslims have no homelands to which they could go back. It is all very well for religious extremists to preach the extra-territorial aspect of Islam and to say that the loyalty of the Muslims comprehends no particular geographical area, but embraces the entire Muslim world. As an abstract principle, extra-territoriality sounds exceedingly good, but it is unrealizable. Let us briefly examine its implications. Mr Zafar Ali Khan explains it in these words :

'The Prophet's definition of Pan-Islamism will never grow old. "A Moslem's relation to another Moslem," exclaimed

WHAT IS THIS TWO-NATIONS THEORY

the Sarwar-i-Kainat, "may be likened to that of the two hands which wash each other." The universal brotherhood founded by Islam is a moral binding force which has no equal. Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism and many other "isms" of that ilk are only ethnic ebullitions of a territorial character. The brotherhood of Islam or Pan-Islamism if you will, transcends all considerations of race and class and is of an extra-territorial type in which all the Moslem populations of the world merge their geographical identity and become one nation.' (Quoted in the book *Nationality and Empire* by Bipin Chandra Pal)

No one can withhold his admiration from the theological unity implicit in Pan-Islamism, but if this unity is sought to be projected into secular matters, thereby enforcing no obligation upon the Muslims to be loyal and attached to their mother-countries and to live in peace and amity with their non-Muslim countrymen, then we would say that any implementation of the principles of Pan-Islamism is either impossible or fraught with disaster. It is well known that the ferment of nationalism has exercised the same all-pervasive influence in the Muslim States, as in the rest of the civilized world. Like others, these States have developed a high sense of exclusive and self-regarding nationalism. Some of them like Turkey are, in fact, Muslim by courtesy. They will not, therefore, countenance any extended application of the principle of Pan-Islamism or extra-territoriality if it clashes with their nationalism or national interests.

So, such of those Muslims who still cling to the belief that they have a better kinship with the Muslims outside India than with their non-Muslim countrymen, are sadly mistaken. No Muslim State would be ready to receive them with open arms, should they decide to make a *hizrat*. Apart from the fact that any large-scale exodus of the people of one country to another is impracticable, there is absolutely nothing in common racially, linguistically, culturally and otherwise, between the Indian Muslims and their co-religionists outside India. It is, however, unnecessary to stretch this discussion, for it must be obvious to every right-thinking Muslim how dangerous it is to toy with the idea of extra-territoriality. The experience of 1920 is a grim warning to all. In that year an attempt was made by some 18,000 Muslims to quit India permanently as a protest against Britain's policy towards Muslim holy places. Having sold their all for a song, they proceeded on a pilgrimage to Afghanistan. Let the remainder of this tragic

story be told by the Report of the Government of India for 1920 :

'At first Afghanistan seemed to have looked upon it with something like favour. Before long, however, the immense scale upon which the movement was pursued rendered it necessary for the Afghan authorities, whose country is poor and comparatively sterile, to forbid altogether the admission of pilgrims. As a result, the tide of emigrants slowly ebbed and fell back, sadly disillusioned, to its former home. The road from Peshawar to Kabul was strewn with graves of old men, women and children who had succumbed to the difficulties of the journey. The unhappy emigrants when they returned found themselves homeless and penniless, with their property in the hands of those to whom they had sold it for a tithe of its value in the first flush of their religious enthusiasm.'

(Pp. 52-53)

Is it necessary to add, after a recital of this tragic story, that the Muslims of India have no homelands away and apart from India ?

It is of interest to recall in this connexion that in the early days of his career as a nationalist, Mr Jinnah viewed with disfavour all extra-territorial activities carried on in this country, although he has now developed a sudden affection for his Muslim 'brethren' across the border and the seas. He did not participate in the Khilafat movement,—a fact which is commented upon by Dr Ambedkar in these words :

'This was no doubt due to the fact that then he was a statutory Mussalman with none of the religious fire of the orthodox which he now says is burning within him. But the real reason why he did not join the Khilafat was because he was opposed to the Indian Mussalmans engaging themselves in extra-territorial affairs relating to Muslims outside India. (*Thoughts on Pakistan*, p. 319)

The Nizam also kept himself aloof from the movement and warned his subjects against joining the agitation, thus subordinating his religious zeal to prudence and self-interest. (*India Old and New* by Sir Valentine Chirol, p. 240) Thus considered from any point of view, India is as much the motherland of the Muslims as of the Hindus and other communities.

Lastly, there is the question of religion. There is no doubt that Hinduism and Islam differ, but the point at issue is whether this difference is so great as to make it impossible for the Hindus and Muslims to live together in peace and amity. History, past and present, conclusively proves the fallacy of the contention that these

two communities have always been flying at one another's throat. If such were the case, eight hundred years of continuous religious wars between them would have ended in the extirpation of one of the two communities or both, thus reducing the country to a veritable shambles. It is an outrage upon human dignity to make such wild and unfounded allegations about the Hindu-Muslim relations. As I have already shown elsewhere, even in the hey-days of Muslim rule, when the emphasis laid upon religion was much greater than it is today, religious persecution was never adopted as a deliberate State policy, but was resorted to by some individual rulers with false and misguided notions of religion. The pages of history are replete with instances of the great harmony and mutual trust which prevailed between the two communities. Hindus were freely appointed to key positions in Muslim states and this confidence was fully reciprocated by Hindu rulers. I draw pointed attention to the impartiality of the Muslim rulers of the Deccan. The Adilshahi kings of Bijapur held sway for centuries—and the Hindus were the mainstay of this Muslim state.

Mr Jinnah and his party have been most insistently declaring that under a unitary system of Government, the Muslims will be stamped out of existence. This is a useful stick with which to beat the Hindus, but it has no relation to facts. Indeed, we cannot imagine a more convincing testimony to the spirit of toleration which existed in the past than by pointing to the fact that had there been religious persecution and mutual hatred on a wide scale it would have been impossible for the Muslims, who began with small numbers, to grow to their present impressive figure. It is true that in the eighteenth century, India had become a cockpit of internecine wars, but these conflicts were essentially dynastic and political rather than religious.

But we need not go to the past to prove what is evident today. Normally the relations between the two communities are cordial—a feature which is markedly noticeable in the villages, which are in fact the real India. Here in the village, all communities live in perfect harmony, for the village system is a closely knit organism, where no member of the community can afford to pull at tangents without detriment to his economic interests. Interdependence conduces to mutual understanding and confidence. This explains why harmony exists between the Hindus and Muslims in the villages. They freely participate in one another's social and religious functions and give proofs of mutual goodwill in numerous other ways. It is true that the calm of the villages is

sometimes disturbed by outbreaks of violence, which very often, though not communal in origin, are deliberately given that turn by interested persons and parties. It is the triumvirate,—the religious preacher, the communal politician and the interested official,—who are the real disturbers of the peace. Bread-winning is the eternal problem of the villager and, if to his cheerless life, his ignorance and attachment to the forms of religion are harnessed, he is apt to act desperately. That is how communal riots break out, although basically the problem is an economic one.

‘Almost invariably there is some economic basis to Hindu-Muslim rivalry,’ write the authors of *Rise and Fulfilment of British Rule in India*. ‘Where such rivalry exists disturbances usually follow some religious provocation—the sacrificial killing of cows or the playing of music in front of mosques—but the underlying force is an economic grievance.’ (p. 623)

Take the case of Bengal, a Muslim-majority Province. In the villages of this Province, as in all the villages in the country, the Hindus and Muslims are hardly aware of their differences. There is so much in common between them. As the Census Report of 1931 points out, the Moulvi and the communal politician, with their particular axes to grind, invade the villages and deliberately provoke separatist feelings amongst the Muslims. These men have not a farthing to lose and a pang to suffer in setting people to break one another’s heads. In fact, they thrive upon fostering communal ill-will. In this work of disruption they receive the support of a powerful press and a well-organized communal organization, both of which are firmly entrenched in towns and cities. It is from these places that the fountains of intercommunal relations are poisoned. If you can curb these nests of communalism, you will find cordiality restored in the villages. This fact has been brought out by Mahatma Gandhi in these words :

‘There is no disunity among the Hindu and Muslim masses. The disunity is at the surface, and this counts so much, since those who are at the surface are the people who represent the political mind of India.’

But assuming that the religious differences between the Hindus and Muslims are great, this fact does not in any way strengthen the League’s claim that the Muslims are a separate nation. In the preceding paragraphs we discussed what constitute the essential bases of a nation, and although religion is one of them, it is not the only one. The fact that the Muslims profess a religion which

different from that of the other communities does not alter the truth that they are an integral part of the Indian population. Religion is essentially a matter between an individual and his Maker, and in India, thanks to the proselytizing zeal of the missionaries, men change their faiths with an ease which economic necessity and ignorance alone can make possible. So, if we accept the League's definition of a 'nation', taking religion as the only criterion, a man can change his nationality as often as his caprice dictates, thus putting even Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde to shame ! But nationality is not such a facile thing to be discarded at will like an unwanted garb. It is the permanent stamp of a people, demarcating them from the rest of mankind. It is a misnomer to speak of Hindu and Muslim nationality. There is one nationality for both and it is neither alterable nor interchangeable, no matter how many times an Indian may change his faith and in whichever part of the world he may reside.

Thus, the Pakistan demand, which is based upon unfounded theories about 'nation' and 'nationality', does not bear much scrutiny. Religion is its sole argument, and whatever support the League has been able to canvass on behalf of a Muslim state, is due to an appeal to religious sentiment. In fact, Pakistan is demanded, not from any real apprehension that the Muslims would be tied to the apron-strings of the Hindus in political, economic and social matters, but in order that they might have a state of their own where they could live in accordance with the tenets of Islam. At any rate, this is the impression created by the utterances of responsible League leaders. I will show later on what kind of a state its supporters want to create. The whole idea is conceived in a spirit of religious exclusiveness. According to them, in the land of Pakistan, as the word itself denotes (*Pak* pure, clear), there should be none but Muslims. We cannot dismiss such views as the effusions of fire-eating radicals. The demand itself represents, as Mr K. M. Munshi so truly points out, the extreme outpost of communal isolationism. Yet profuse promises are held out to the 'minorities' in Pakistan ! But a state that will arise out of antagonism and ill-will cannot be a safe abode for those against whom these feelings are vented.

Mr Jinnah says that according to every definition of the term 'nation', the Muslims are a distinct nation. We will borrow his own emphasis to say that according to every definition of the word, they are *not* a nation but a community—an important one—like any other in India, with its destinies strongly and indissolubly

linked with those of others in the land. The theory that religion is the sole recommendation for the separate existence of a people, otherwise forming an integral part of the population, is hopelessly out of date. We cannot create a religion-state any more than we can take a round of the world in the outmoded bullock-cart. This is a modern world in which the emphasis is not on religion but on the economic well-being of the individual. While the faith of a person is a matter between himself and his God, his social happiness is the responsibility of the State. Some decades ago Kemal Atatürk delivered a death-blow to the theory that 'Islam is not only a religion but also a fatherland'. I give below his own words to emphasize the truth that, while the world has moved incredibly forward, it is suicidal folly for us in India to cling to outmoded ideas. Thus said the great Turkish statesman :

'The dream of the centuries, cherished by Muslims, that the Caliphate should be an Islamic government including them all, has never proved realizable. It has become rather a cause of dissensions, of anarchy, of the war between believers. Better apprehended, the interests of all have made clear this truth : that the duty of the Muslims is to arrange distinct governments for themselves. The true bond between them is the conviction that "all believers are brethren".' (Quoted in *The Communal Triangle in India*, pp. 124-125) (See also *Orientalism* by Sir Ronald Storrs for further information on Kemal's views on the subject).

Why, then, should the Muslim League seek to ignore the whole range of historical facts and the obvious tendencies of the modern world ? Why should it turn a blind eye to what is happening in those very Muslim countries with which it has so suddenly developed a kinship ? Religious nationalism has no place in a world struggling towards integration. No dire calamity will, therefore, await the Muslims of India by choosing to live, as they have lived for centuries, in this great country of us all.

It is distressing to note that Dr Ambedkar was among the first to pledge his support to Pakistan, unmindful of the patent irrationality of the League's separatist demand. Having done so, the learned Doctor has, perhaps unwittingly allowed many fallacies to creep into his *Thoughts on Pakistan*. It is unnecessary to review his book here, but a few of his wrong assumptions, which have not already been dealt with in the course of this discussion, might be mentioned here.

First, Dr Ambedkar sees no enormity in the League's objective

WHAT IS THIS TWO-NATIONS THEORY

by comparing it with the demand for a redistribution of some of the British Indian Provinces on a linguistic basis. He holds that the movement of Karnataka for its unification into a single administrative area and of Andhra for a separate Province is as separatist in its import as is the demand for Pakistan. I personally claim to have played a little part in popularizing the idea of reconstructing some of the Provinces on a linguistic basis. Their existing composition is, it is well known, an outrage upon all the canons of territorial demarcation. They were formed in a hurry to suit the administrative convenience of a rapidly expanding British power in the country. In consequence, no scientific and expert knowledge was brought to bear upon their formation. Today the injustices involved in administering composite and unwieldy provinces are fully recognized and the demand for the creation of linguistic provinces is, therefore, essentially based upon ending this iniquity and upon imparting greater unity and cohesion to the linguistic units so as to enable them to serve the country better. What is involved in the demand is, not the setting up of a new sovereign state or states, having nothing to do and even antagonistic to the rest of India, but the introduction of a certain amount of decentralization in the existing provincial administrations. To compare this simple demand with that of the League is to be guilty of misrepresentation. From the point of view of his own Province, one can understand Dr Ambedkar's hostility to Karnataka's claim for the unification of its territories, which are fragmented into nearly thirty different administrative units, but he cannot, in fairness to himself, speak of Pakistan and of linguistic provinces in the same breath.

Secondly, Dr Ambedkar wants us to concede the principle of Pakistan on the ground that the Hindus and Muslims can never work together in a spirit of mutual trust and co-operation. To prove his contention he cites certain isolated and unfortunate incidents in history, as if they were and are still normal occurrences in the Hindu-Muslim relations. We cannot accept this misreading of Indian history. It is unhistorical and contrary to all the dictates of commonsense to suggest that the two communities have been in perpetual conflict with one another for now over eight hundred years. To assert that this is so is to cast a slur upon Indian civilization. The remarks of the authors of *The Communal Triangle in India* on the subject are apposite :

'This is a gross misrepresentation of facts and contrary to all accepted canons of human psychology and behaviour. To

suggest that for a thousand years Hindus and Muslims lived together; not peacefully, but like Plato's team of horses one of which flies to the sun while the other draws towards the earth, is not only unhistorical but absurd, because that is not the way in which men live together or live creatively.' (p. 20)

Thirdly, notwithstanding his all-round attacks upon the Congress, the Hindus, and the Mahasabha, Dr Ambedkar has ill-disguised his feelings against the Muslims ! A careful perusal of his book leads one to the conclusion that Dr Ambedkar considers the Muslims an intractable people with whom it is impossible to work in co-operation. At page 59 of his book he says that if the Muslim invaders of India had gone back 'that would have been a blessing'. For his opinion on Muslim political backwardness, see pages 228-29. Lastly, here is his opinion on what he calls the 'adoption by the Muslims of the gangsters' methods in politics'. He says : 'The riots are a sufficient indication that gangsterism has become a settled part of their (Muslim) strategy in politics.' (p. 267)

Evidently, his suggested remedy to the so-called Muslim intransigence is to concede Pakistan so that they might be banished to a corner of India ! It is true that he does not say this in so many words, but that is the impression which his book leaves on one's mind. We cannot subscribe to ideas such as these, whether they emanate from Dr Ambedkar or anybody else. They have their fallacies as well as their pitfalls. The Muslims as a community are not intractable, if a party among them is. The League might be powerful, but there are other Muslim parties which do not yield the palm to the nationalists in their devotion to the country and sacrifice for its sake. Moreover, it is a mistake to suppose that the Hindu-Muslim problem will be solved by permanently assigning certain territories to the Muslims. On the contrary, it will assume a more sinister aspect, resulting more likely than not, in large-scale and unending conflicts between the two States.

Lastly, according to Dr Ambedkar's own showing, the revenue of Pakistan (Rs. 36 crores), as compared with that of Hindustan (Rs. 120 crores), will be meagre and inadequate. Why then is he prepared to support Pakistan ?

As a conclusion to this Chapter, may I remind Dr Ambedkar and all those latest recruits to the separatist idea that Pakistan solves no problems and that the greatest art known to man is the art of living together ? It is selfishness of the most blatant kind

63

and a blind imitation of Western power politics that are threatening to disturb the even tenor of Hindu-Muslim relations. Let us not view our problems out of focus and then come to wrong conclusions. Let us listen to the wise words of our national philosopher and take them as our guide for solving our difficulties. Thus says Dr Sir S. Radhakrishnan :

‘The ordinary human being is decent, is peacefully inclined; hates bloodshed, has no joy in battle. This fundamental humanity has kept our race going. It is to be seen in the mother at the cradle of her child, in the ploughman at his furrow, in the scientist in his laboratory, and in the young and the old when they love and worship. This love of man, this faith in the moral structure of society has upheld the spirit of man against many tyrannies and shall uphold it still.’ (Convocation Address at the Benares Hindu University, Dec. 17, 1938)

5. THE MINORITIES

Elsewhere I have said that Pakistan will not solve any of our problems and that it will only accentuate them. The truth of this remark will be evident if we study the problem of the minorities. It must be noted that Mr Jinnah has dropped the word ‘minorities’ like a bad penny when referring to the Muslims. Evidently, this is in pursuit of his theory that they are a ‘nation’. But he discovered their separate ‘nationality’ only four years ago, for we find that he freely referred to them as ‘minorities’ in the numerous utterances and statements made by him till the end of January 1940. The problem of minorities cannot, however, be solved by merely discarding the word.

It is a sad commentary upon the perversity of our politics that even such an innocuous term as ‘minorities’ is regarded, at least by some, as an opprobrious epithet. It stinks in their nostrils. It conjures up in their minds strange pictures of a great and proud community being degraded to the level of lesser breeds. But no such stigma is attached to anyone belonging to a minority community. After all, minorities are the inevitable features of national life in almost every country in the world.

Considered from a narrow point of view, the British Isles have their racial and religious minorities in the Welsh, the Scotch and the Irish people. Russia is the classic home of minority groups.

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

The U.S.S.R. nurses in its capacious bosom minorities of every type and variety and in varying stages of development. The following quotation on Russia is apposite :

‘ The Soviet Government has had to solve a minorities problem of extraordinary complexity. The 1926 census lists 174 different races who are citizens of the U.S.S.R. The total population is now estimated at between 160 and 180 million, more than three-quarters of whom live in the European area.’
(*An Atlas of Current Affairs* (1938) by J. F. Horrabin, p. 105)

How the existence of these minorities has not impaired the matchless resistance of Russia to the invader is a matter of current history. But it is not Russia alone which is the abode of minorities. Tiny Belgium has its linguistic minorities in the same manner as Spain has. In Poland there were only 69 per cent. Poles, while the rest of the population consisted of Ukrainians, White Russians, Germans, Lithuanians and so on. Czecho-Slovakia too was a composite state, with many racial strands in the composition of its population. Yugoslavia was no better. Rumania, though more homogeneous, had nevertheless such minorities as Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Turks and Tartars. (I have used the past tense as regards the Succession States because a revision of their pre-war boundaries is under consideration. For further details regarding the problem of nationality in Europe read *The Atlas of Today and Tomorrow* by Alexander Rade.) Examples like these might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but those which I have mentioned here are sufficient to indicate that practically no country, old or new, is free from the problem of minorities. The former Succession States afford both an illustration and a warning to us as to how we grapple with our own problem of minorities. We cannot deal with this problem with any hope of success so long as we approach it with exaggerated notions of the importance of this community or that.

The Muslim League indignantly refuses to accept the status of a ‘ minority ’ for the Muslims of India. But what is the position ? The total population of India, according to the Census of 1941, is 38,89,97,955 people, of whom 29,58,08,722 reside in the British Indian Provinces. The relative numerical strength of the Hindus and Muslims is as follows :

	<i>India</i>	<i>British India</i>
Hindus	25,49,30,506	19,08,10,953
Muslims	9,20,58,096	7,93,98,503

The Hindus are in an overwhelming majority in seven out of eleven Provinces while the Muslims predominate in four Provinces. The following are the Hindu-majority Provinces :

<i>Province</i>	<i>Hindus</i>	<i>Muslims</i>
Madras	4,27,99,822	38,96,452
Bombay	1,65,55,390	19,20,368
United Provinces	4,58,11,669	84,16,308
Bihar	2,65,14,269	47,16,314
Central Provinces & Berar ..	1,29,31,996	7,83,697
Assam	42,13,223	34,42,479
Orissa	68,32,706	1,46,301
	15,56,59,075	2,33,21,919
The Muslim-majority Provinces are as follows :		
Bengal	2,50,59,024	3,30,05,434
Punjab	75,50,372	1,62,17,242
N.W. Frontier Province ..	1,80,321	27,88,797
Sind	12,29,926	32,08,325
	3,40,19,643	5,52,19,798

What do these figures indicate ? They show that in the total population of the country the Hindus are in a clear majority over the Muslims in the ratio of approximately 3 to 1. This ratio is more than doubled in the seven Provinces in which they are in a majority. They, however, lose their preponderance in four Provinces where the Muslims are in a clear majority, which is absolute in two, namely, the N.W. Frontier Provinces and Sind. But in Bengal and the Punjab the Hindu population is considerable and is in the ratio of 1.3 Muslim to 1 Hindu and 2.2 to 1, respectively. In the Punjab the balance of communal population is further disturbed by 37,57,401 Sikhs, who are solidly opposed to Pakistan.

We find from these figures that there are only 2,33,21,919 Muslims as against 15,56,59,075 Hindus in the seven Hindu-majority Provinces while in the Muslim-majority Provinces, the Hindus, numbering 3,40,19,643 plus 38,62,632 Sikhs, constitute a considerable minority.

It is logical to ask, if indeed there is any logic in a subject like this, by what right the Muslim League wants to impose a minority status upon the Hindus in four Provinces when they are in a majority in the total population of the country and in seven out of eleven Provinces. If the League is anxious over the fate

of 2,33,21,919 Muslims, have not the Hindus and Sikhs, numbering 3,78,82,275, the right to object to a Muslim raj? In other words, if according to the League, the Muslims object to majority rule in the country, *ipso facto* it is precluded from foisting a minority status upon non-Muslims in a state likely to be dominated by a communal oligarchy.

The illogicality of the League's attitude to the minorities problem does not end here. It is noteworthy that in the Muslim-majority Provinces, the Muslims are not in a majority in every district and Division of each Province. Take Bengal. The Burdwan Division, consisting of Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura, Midnapur, Hoogly and Howrah districts, with an area of 14,135 square miles and a population of 1,02,87,369, is inhabited by Hindus and Muslims in the following numbers :

Hindus	81,25,185
Muslims	14,29,500

The Presidency Division consists of 24-Paraganas, Calcutta, Nadia, Murshidabad, Jessore and Khulna districts and has an area of 16,402 square miles with a population of 1,28,17,087. Of this the Hindus and Muslims are 68,83,217 and 57,11,354, respectively.

Again, take the Punjab. The Ambala Division has six districts, namely, Hissar, Rohtak, Gurgaon, Karnal, Ambala, and Simla. The area of this Division is 14,750 square miles and has a population of 46,95,462. The relative numerical strength of the Hindus and Muslims in this Division is :

Hindus	30,99,483
Muslims	13,18,136

The Jullundur Division has an area of 18,992 square miles and has Kangra, Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhiana and Ferozepore districts. Its total population is 54,38,531. Of this the Hindus number 19,50,802 and the Muslims 18,77,742.

What does the Muslim League want to do with these Hindu-majority Divisions in Bengal and the Punjab? Does it want to annex them to Pakistan? If so, why?

The League has left us guessing on many points about its objective. We will not join in the speculation on what precisely will be the areas comprising the new state, firstly, because we refuse to subscribe to the hypothesis that Pakistan should become acceptable if the Hindu-majority districts in Bengal and the Punjab are guaranteed to be excluded from it. Secondly, we cannot be a party to the breaking up of the existing unity of these Provinces in the name of religion. Thirdly, no matter, howsoever 'satis-

factorily' and 'equitably' the line of demarcation may be drawn between the Hindu-majority and the Muslim-majority districts in these Provinces, the resultant arrangement would still be most arbitrary and high-handed in so far as the Hindus and Sikhs on the other side of the border are concerned. Lastly, we cannot conceive an arrangement which would ensure a homogeneous population and a compact and contiguous territory for Pakistan unless a large-scale transference of millions of families affecting, as 'Punjabi' in his *Confederacy of India* estimates, two-thirds of the total population of India, is resorted to.

Kindly people talk casually of the 'exchange' and 'expatriation' of populations, without bestowing a moment's serious thought on the implications of such transfers. The transport of crores of people across vast stretches of territory is not in itself a small matter, and when we come to consider the magnitude of the problems that will arise in settling these people in areas totally alien to them, the whole question assumes a complexity which no sensible man can hope to solve successfully. It is well known how deeply the people in the villages are attached to their lands and their rural environments. They have been living in their village homes for countless generations and it will not be without deep sorrow that they could tear themselves away from their homes. It is an illusion to suppose that they can be persuaded to leave their homes peacefully. Much compulsion and force will doubtless be needed, perhaps involving considerable loss of life and damage to property.

If, however, it is argued that no exchange of populations is either contemplated or necessary, then Pakistan is bound to remain a geographical hotch-potch with a composite population. This arrangement, instead of solving our problems, will only accentuate them, for the question of the rights and security of non-Muslim communities in Pakistan is bound to provoke controversies leading to conflicts between Pakistan and Hindustan. It is for these reasons that I do not propose to examine the various schemes put forward in connexion with the territories of Pakistan.

Nor is it wise and fair to trifle with the fate of millions of people with a play of figures. After all, a mere counting of heads should not be the sole criterion for solving the problem of the minorities. We have the example of countries in which minorities have played a considerable part in contributing to their progress. The non-Muslim populations in the Muslim area are not such inconsequential people, either in point of numbers or of the

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

position which they occupy in their Provinces, as to be made the plaything of communal intrasigence. It is well known that only a few decades ago Bengal led the rest of the country in almost every department of national life. It was the spear-head of attack upon reaction and bureaucracy. The late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan entertained a warm affection for the Bengalis as a progressive and enlightened people. By its contribution to science, art and literature, Bengal has played a notable part in placing India on the map of the world. A Tagore, a Bose, a Ray and a Sarojini Devi, to mention only a few names out of a brilliant galaxy of Bengali poets, scholars, artists and scientists, are an ornament to any province or country in which they are born. The educational progress achieved by the province, thanks to the enterprise of the Hindus, is admirable.

Take the case of the Punjab and Sind. There the Hindus have distinguished themselves by their all-round progress, particularly in the industrial, banking and commercial enterprises. In fact, whatever economic prosperity which these provinces enjoy today is largely due to the enterprise of this community. The benefits which accrue from Hindu enterprise are fully reaped by the Muslims as well. Dealing with the case of the Punjab, Sir Jogendra Singh wrote thus :

‘ Then again in the Punjab the Muslim population at the last Census came to 14,929,896 but nearly 5 millions are : weavers 612,579, herdsman 521,347, cobblers 464,218, potters 423,617, converted sweepers 412,300, carpenters 346,948, oilmen 344,927, beggars 256,533, bards 244,330, barbers 296,104, blacksmiths 241,972, washermen 162,224, butchers 127,198. All these depend largely for their livelihood on non-Muslims.

It was this tyranny of unalterable conditions which converted the late Sir Fazli-Hussain and made him a strong advocate of adult franchise.’ (An article in the *Statesman* dated 5 March 40).

The authors of the book *The Communal Triangle in India* discuss the position of the Hindus in the Muslim-majority provinces in these words :

‘ In the Muslim zones capital is concentrated mostly with the Hindus. The Hindus of North-West Frontier Province, for instance, contribute 80 per cent. of the Income Tax. In Bengal, nearly three-fourths of the revenue comes from them, while approximately 87 per cent. of the legal, 80 per cent. of

the medical and 83 per cent. of the Banking, Insurance and Exchange business is in Hindu hands. The predominance of Hindus in the major cities of the proposed state of Pakistan has its own significance.' (pp. 217-218)

As a foot-note to this passage they add :

'The percentage of non-Muslim population is 70.8 in Hyderabad (Sind), 53.1 in Karachi, 60.1 in Sukkur, 66.7 in Bannu and 45 in Dera Ismail Khan.'

Thus, the wealth and the consequent all-round progress of the Hindus have won for them a pre-eminent place in the Muslim-majority Provinces. Will not injury done to their interests harm the Muslims as well? We can easily foresee that the spirit of mutual understanding and toleration which now governs the relations between the various communities living in the Muslim-majority Provinces will cease to exist, should Pakistan become a *fait accompli*. Notwithstanding the assurances of Mr Jinnah to the Hindus and the Sikhs, it is no use disguising the fact that Pakistan will be governed according to the dictates of religion. In a state where the system of governance is based upon religion, mere enterprise and ability are hardly calculated to be the hall-marks of preferment and promotion. Eligibility will be according to religious labels, and those who do not possess them must nurse their talent and disappointment together in secret.

We need have no illusions as regards the status of the Hindus and the Sikhs in Pakistan. Being 'non-conformists', they must pay the penalty of being treated as belonging to 'lesser breeds'. They will have two courses open to them; they should either, without much ado, abdicate their present position and accept the role of nonentities, or carry on an incessant fight for preserving their rights. I am sure I am not guilty of drawing an imaginary picture of the conditions likely to exist in Pakistan. We can easily visualize the sort of government which will prevail in it, if we examine the material with which the edifice of the new state is sought to be built. Hatred and fanaticism are its foundations. The League, the sponsor of the separatist idea, has never for once sought to win public opinion in its favour through the approved methods of discussion and compromise. On the contrary, we hear day in and day out disquisitions on the government of Pakistan, which are bound to cause profound disquiet in the minds of all lovers of India and advocates of inter-communal good relations. Pakistan, say its protagonists, must be the abode of the Paks, undefiled by the

presence of infidels.¹ Responsible League leaders are vying with one another in insulting other communities and in attacking the most respected leaders of India in an unrestrained manner. If Pakistan is to draw its breath in hatred and investive, it will thrive upon the same food. There is no doubt that fanatics and extremists will have their own way in it. A few specimens from the utterances and articles of responsible League leaders will illustrate what has been stated above.

Mr Fazlul Huq is an emotional man, as he has himself admitted, and in the exuberance of his emotion he used to say, as a member of the League, many bitter things against the Congress and the Hindus. He once compared the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha to barking dogs and biting dogs respectively ! On another occasion he said :

‘I am not afraid of anyone but Allah and can face 22 crores of Hindus without moving a muscle. I have faith in God and I am confident that in spite of their large numbers I will put them (Hindus) down. It is the Moslems alone who have a future. The “Kaffir” has no future because he is so uncertain of his future. The “Kaffir” has no future life at all.’ (Quoted in *Akhand Hindustan* by K. M. Munshi.)

Other members of the League are not emotional men like Mr Huq who has at least the largeness of heart to make *amende honorable* when he realizes the error of his ways. Many a prominent member of the League has often asked the Government to remain neutral for a while so that the Muslims might ‘settle their accounts’ with the Hindus. Here is what Sir A. M. K. Dehlavi says :

‘I request the British Government to hold their hands off law and order and leave us alone to ourselves to settle the minority issues with the Congress one way or the other, in a few weeks’ time.’

At the Muslim League Conference held at Sultankot in Sind and presided over by Mr G. M. Syed, a prominent Leaguer of that Province, an Urdu song was sung which in translation reads thus :

‘Let there be in Pakistan the separate centre
Of Islam.

We shall not, in Pakistan, have to look at faces

1. ‘Hatred is a powerful spur to action,’ says Dr Inge, ‘and none the less because it is irrational. . . . To excite hatred, it is only necessary to repeat catchwords, the more meaningless the better ; they have the same effect that a red rag has on a bull. Can hatred be described as a religious emotion ? Unfortunately it can ; it has played a great part in religious history.’

Of non-Muslims.

The abode of the Muslim nation will brighten
Up only when in the Pakistan there remain
No idolatrous thorns.

They (Hindus) whose function is to be slaves
Have no right to participate in Government.
Nowhere have they succeeded in governing.

(See *Akhand Hindustan*.)

Nice song this,—the Song of Hatred! Here is another specimen: 'The Azad,' a Muslim organ, published a poem in which the 'victorious' soldiers of the League were exhorted to march against the idolatrous Hindus. They were asked to 'spill such blood as is required'. If Pakistan is not granted, the poem holds out the threat that spears and swords would be used. Here is a sample:

'Come quickly—break down Lath-manath.

If you want freedom, Burn! Burn! Burn!

The Jatu-Griha (Hindu homes) and let

All trouble end.'

(See *Akhan Hindustan*.)

A unique way of ending all trouble indeed! Compared to what these fanatics intend to do to the minorities in Pakistan, the reign of Aurangzeb was indeed a mercy!! These are not the outbursts of irresponsible men; the hymn of hatred which they contain has in fact become the political gospel of the League.

It is, therefore, a fallacy to assume that if an agreement on mutual relations is drawn up between Pakistan and Hindustan, there will be no trouble between the two states. No such agreement is possible. It will be an agreement between two dissimilar entities, each with mutually differing and antagonistic attitudes and approaches to life and its problems. If Hindustan will be governed according to secular principles, the foundations of Pakistan will be the tenets of Islam. Listen to what 'Punjabi' says on Muslim attitude to religion and politics:

'The Muslims cannot divorce their religion from their politics. In Islam, religious and political beliefs are not separated from each other. It speaks of this world as well as of the world to come. Religion and politics are inseparably associated in the minds and thoughts of all Muslims. They cannot be first Indians and then Muslims or vice versa. Their religion includes their politics, and their politics are a part of their religion. The mosque not only constitutes the place of worship but also the Assembly Hall. . . . The mosque forms

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

the centre of all aspects of their public life, religious, social, economic and political. Consequently, they are not in a position to separate religion from politics, or to prefer one to the other. They are born into a system. The system is not thrust upon them. Religion and politics are the same to them. Hence Hindu-Muslim unity or nationalism, signifying homogeneity between them in all non-religious matters, is unimaginable. The Islamic polity, in which religion and politics are inseparably united, requires perfect isolation for its development. The idea of a common State with heterogeneous membership is alien to Islam, and can never be fruitful.' (Quoted in *Pakistan* by Dr Rajendra Prasad, pp. 11-12)

Notwithstanding the endless repetitions which this lengthy quotation contains, it makes two points clear, namely, that the ideals of Islam, whatever they are, can only be cherished and cultivated in isolation and that the new Muslim state cannot be bi- or multi-national, even assuming the Hindus and Muslims to be two different nations.

It is a bundle of such antiquated and unfounded conceptions which constitutes the *rationale* of the Pakistan demand. Already we hear wild talk about 'corridors' and 'outlets to sea', and claims to the ports of Calcutta and Madras. Separatist enthusiasts would like to convert Hyderabad (Deccan) into another miniature Pakistan because of the historical accident that a Muslim ruler happens to govern that State. Thus, slowly and steadily the vision of Muslim India expands until it comprehends the whole country in one sweep. Chaudhury Khaliquazamman, one of the shining lights of the League, has made no secret of his intentions to use Pakistan as the jumping-off ground for realizing the Pan-Islamic ideal. We should not be surprised at the League's extremist politics, for extremism can only sustain itself by greater extremism.

We already see the baneful effects of the League's politics all over the country. Almost every minority group wants a 'homeland' of its own. The Pathans and the Sikhs in the north and the Dravids in the south would like to have separate sovereign states for themselves. We do not yet know in how many other hearts the passion for separate nationality beats. We need not doubt that these inaudible heartbeats will soon grow into a clamant demand, if the first runner in the race towards India's disintegration reaches his goal. India will then be a pretty picture to look at ! Internal strife and discord will weaken and render her helpless,

PAKISTAN IS UNNECESSARY

exposing her to be plundered and violated by every foreign invader. I am not drawing a fantastic picture. If we concede the demand of one, we forfeit the right to refuse the claims of many. The very illogicality of the first step will lead us on to further illogical steps. The enemies of India cannot wish for worse than to see her national integrity cut into mincemeat.

For these reasons, I say that concession to the Pakistan principle is no panacea to our minorities problem. I fail to see any enormity in the present structure of the Muslim-majority Provinces, nor do I find any violence done to Muslim interests in them. You cannot explain away the fact of Muslim preponderance in them. They have been in charge of the affairs of their Province since the Act of 1935 came into force. Well or ill, they have been running their administrations with the co-operation of non-Muslim communities. Why should they permanently antagonize their brethren of other faiths by listening to the League? As it is, their position is unassailable, but they will forfeit the co-operation of non-Muslims, should they lend their ear to the League's advice for imposing the status of a permanent statutory minority upon the Hindus, Sikhs and other communities.

6. PAKISTAN IS UNNECESSARY

For some years past we have been hearing a good deal of discussion for and against Pakistan. It would be profitable if we consider at this stage whether the formation of a separate sovereign state out of the Indian territories is really necessary and whether it is practicable. The Muslim League might want to possess many things in the world, but the necessity and the feasibility of its claims must first be established.

It is common knowledge that no modern government can function efficiently unless it has sound finances. A state without adequate financial resources is like a house built upon sagging foundations. The modern conception of a government's obligations no longer squares with the old-time view that people exist mainly or solely for catering to the luxuries and extravagances of their rulers. Nor does the responsibility of a government begin and end with the provision of an adequate police force for preventing individuals and communities from flying at each other's throats! The growth of political education and a corresponding development in the scientific knowledge impose upon governments obligations which tend to grow rather than diminish.

India provides many examples to verify the truth of these observations. Most of the Indian States are in a state of stagnation and decay because of their pitifully small revenues. Nor are all the British Indian Provinces free from financial difficulties. None of the newly-created ones, namely, Orissa, Sind and the N.W.F. Province, is in a condition of survival without artificial respiration from the Central finances. They are fed with annual subventions ranging from Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 1 crore. The handicaps of a Province with inadequate revenues were described by Mr Biswanath Das, the then Chief Minister of Orissa, when introducing the Budget for 1937-38. He said :

‘ Orissa has to depend on Bihar for her High Court, Medical and Engineering Colleges and such other institutions on payment of heavy proportionate contribution. The demand for the contribution was so high that the Government of Orissa have only paid 70 per cent. of their annual demand leaving the rest to be decided either by mutual agreement or further enquiry and correspondence or to be decided by the Government of India. All these add to the difficulties of estimating our expenditure which is often higher than the amount budgeted.’

This was his tale of woe despite the fact that Orissa received a subvention of Rs. 47 lakhs for that year !

The foregoing remarks have a direct bearing on the question of the financial position of Pakistan. The League has maintained a discreet silence on this vital aspect of its demand for a separate Muslim state. We should not forget that Pakistan will have to nurse in its bosom two deficit Provinces, namely, Sind and the N.W.F. Province, each of which receives an annual subvention of Rs. 1 crore and a little more. Dr Ambedkar gives some interesting figures to show the relative financial strength of Pakistan and Hindustan. Although these figures are not up to date, they may be taken as a useful starting-point for our discussion.

Resources of Pakistan

<i>Province</i>			<i>Revenue raised by Provincial Government from Provincial sources</i>	<i>Revenue raised by Central Government from Central sources</i>
Bengal	..	..	12,76,60,892	23,79,01,583
Punjab	..	..	11,35,86,355	1,18,01,385
Sind	..	..	3,70,29,354	5,66,46,915
N.W.F.P.	..	..	1,80,83,548	9,28,294

PAKISTAN IS UNNECESSARY

The total revenue of Pakistan from both these sources will be Rs. 60,56,38,326.

<i>Resources of Hindustan</i>		<i>Provincial</i>	<i>Central</i>
Madras	.. ..	16,13,44,520	9,53,26,745
Bombay	.. ..	12,44,59,553	22,53,44,247
U.P.	.. ..	12,79,99,851	4,05,53,030
Bihar	.. ..	5,23,83,030	1,54,37,742
C.P. & Berar	.. ..	4,27,41,280	31,42,682
Assam	.. ..	2,58,48,474	1,87,55,967
Orissa	.. ..	1,81,99,823	5,67,346

The total revenue of Hindustan, according to these figures, will be Rs. 96,24,05,206.

Dr Ambedkar thinks that the revenues derived from the Hindu-majority blocks in Pakistan must be deducted from the total revenue of Rs. 60 crores, as he does not propose to allow the League to annex these areas. The result will be, to quote his own words :

‘To put it in concrete terms, while the revenues of Pakistan and the Eastern Muslim State will be 60 crores minus 24 crores, i.e. 36 crores, the revenues of Hindustan will be 96 crores plus 24 crores, i.e. 120 crores.’ (*Thoughts on Pakistan*, p. 65)

Yet the learned Doctor is not troubled over the financial position of Pakistan which he so enthusiastically supports.

Now, a state with the size and population of Pakistan, if it is really conscious of its obligations to its people cannot claim that its revenue of Rs. 36 crores is adequate. Even if we assume that its subjects would be satisfied with a government based upon Islamic traditions, this fact does not release its rulers from the obligation of providing for the minimum appurtenances of good government. They cannot, for example, turn a blind eye to such secular requirements of the people as the provision of sanitary and medical services, better educational facilities and a well-conceived economic plan.

More over-riding than these ameliorative and progressive measures is the problem of finding the wherewithal for the defence of the state. We should not forget that Pakistan will inherit two frontiers, one in the north-west and another in the south, adjoining Hindustan. It is mere wishful thinking to suppose that the turbulence of the frontier tribesmen will die away as soon as

an 'Islamic state' is established in their neighbourhood. If anything, they will come to regard Pakistan as the abode of their happiness and look up to it to deliver them from the vicissitudes of a precarious living. For, the problem of the tribesmen is not merely to repress their free-booting proclivities but to relieve them from want. Being more virile and with rifles handy, they refuse to die from hunger as did the people of Bengal. Pakistan will, therefore, be faced with the two-fold problem of holding the long-acquired free-booting propensities of the tribesmen in check and of providing them with assured means of living. How much of the Rs. 36 crores could be earmarked for this purpose?

The problem of defending its southern frontiers will be no less difficult. The Hindus with the superiority of their numbers and resources will be in a much stronger position in Hindustan, necessitating the new state to guard its southern frontiers securely. Mr Rajagopalachari speaks optimistically about the arrangements which could be made between Pakistan and Hindustan in matters of common defence. I do not discount the possibility of such an arrangement at the time of forming a new state. It must, however, be borne in mind that Pakistan will be an independent sovereign state, with not a shadow of dependence upon the rest of India. What guarantee is there that an arrangement now arrived at will stand the test of time? Should a rupture occur between the two states—and this is not a hypothetical apprehension—what should be their military preparations to meet a threatening situation? As a precaution against likely aggressions, both states will necessarily have to take defensive measures on their respective borders. In that event, will it not be necessary for them to erect, say, a Maginot Line on one side and a Scigfreid Line on the other? Thus, the fair face of India must needs be hideously disfigured with the horrors of modern fortifications in order that separatist radicals might be humoured! I know these fears look ludicrous today, but their significance will be realized as soon as Pakistan becomes a *fait accompli*.

It is worthy of note that in pre-war years the Government of India were spending between Rs. 120 and Rs. 150 crores annually on the Army in India and yet this enormous sum of money was considered inadequate. This fact should make us realize what a pitifully small amount Rs. 36 crores is. Realizing the patent impracticability of the League's objective, an Anglo-Indian paper referred to it in these terms:

'The Muslim State would not only be heir to almost the

whole of the most vulnerable land frontiers of India, but would simultaneously acquire a vast new border. . . . Whatever meretricious advantages partition may seem to offer in the way of social isolation or cultural autonomy, it certainly is not the path of political or economic self-reliance.'

The League has not told us how it will grapple with this nettlesome and how indeed it will perform the feat of making silk purses out of a sow's ears! Perhaps it has its own plans for pillaging the coffers of Pakistan. We must not be surprised if these plans have something to do with the finances of Hindustan. Perhaps, a loan might be asked from Hindustan, to start with; then it may lead to a claim for a fixed annual subvention, culminating in a demand for a definite share in the revenues of Hindustan! I would ask my readers to ponder over the possibilities of such a move. The League has refused to set any limits to its ambitions. From the Fourteen Points to Pan-Islamism is not a small step. Let us not forget the League's strategy, which Dr Ambedkar describes as 'gangster'. Let us also not forget that Pakistan is planned according to an elaborate system of hostages (see *The Communal Triangle in India*, p. 202). Is it then far-fetched to suppose that similar methods are likely to be employed for replenishing the impoverished treasuries of Pakistan?

The new state will, therefore, land us into many conceivable and unforeseen disasters. Vivisection is no solution to any of our problems just as it has never been a solution in other countries where this prescription has been tried. It is suicidal folly for us in India not to take our lessons from the hard-earned experiences of other countries. Let me give the examples of two countries where the experiment of partition has ended in misery and disaster.

Take the well-known example of Ireland. This country was cut into two so that the ulcer of an Ulster might grow! Ulster came into existence in the name of fictitious differences between the Catholics and the Protestants. That no such cleavages exist in fact is sworn to by Terence MacSwiney who says:

'In Ireland there is no religious dissension, but there is religious insincerity. English politicians, to serve the end of dividing Ireland, have worked on the religious feelings of the North, suggesting the danger of Catholic ascendancy. There is not now, and there never was, any such danger, but our enemies, by raising the cry, sowed discord in the North, with the aim of destroying Irish unity. It should be borne

in mind that when the Republican Standard was first raised in the field in Ireland, in the Rising of 1798, Catholics and Protestants in the North were united in the cause. Belfast was the first home of Republicanism in Ireland. This is the truth of the matter. The present-day cleavage is an unnatural thing created by Ireland's enemies to hold her in subjection and will disappear entirely with political freedom.' (*Principles of Freedom*, Preface)

We have only to substitute the word 'India' in the above passage to depict the true position in our own country! That however, The artificial creation of two mutually independent states in Ireland explains the deep-seated mistrust which prevails between England and Eire,—a misunderstanding which did not diminish even in the presence of an overwhelming threat of invasion of Great Britain by the Germans a few years ago.

Take the case of Czecho-Slovakia where the prescription of division very soon resulted in the complete disappearance of the state itself. Czecho-Slovakia, it must be remembered, was widely recognized as the 'last bulwark of the democracies in Central Europe' (*Blackmail or War* by Genevieve Tabous, p. 251) and yet its dismemberment was urged on grounds which deserved no serious scrutiny. The Südeten Germans and the Czechs had lived together for thousands of years in perfect cordiality and fellow feeling and it was only as a result of a persistent propaganda that the former suddenly woke up to the 'realization' that they were a separate nation. What followed is a matter of recent history. Herr Henlein, who led the separation movement, had himself declared in 1933 in these terms:

'For more than a thousand years Germans and Czechs have lived together in these lands, and always their fate has been common. . . . We feel too vividly the power of historic tradition to consider seriously any kind of territorial revision.' (Quoted in *The Paths that led to War* by John Mackintosh, p. 337.)

The separation of the Südetenland from Czecho-Slovakia very soon led to the absorption of the state itself by Nazi Germany.

Let us consider the problem of Palestine. The Arab-Jew problem is both a warning and an object-lesson to us in India. Lord Balfour promised a national home to world Jewry in this country as a *quid pro quo* for their support to the Allies. The Arabs regarded this deal as a piece of misplaced generosity to the Jews at their own cost. They protested but their protests were

ignored. Year after year Jews began to pour into Palestine from all parts of the world. Being better organized and with greater resources, they had from the very first a decided advantage over the local Arabs. Thanks to Jewish enterprise, the industrial and agricultural progress of the country began to make rapid strides forward. The Arabs found that their lands were fast slipping off their hands and that their economic interests were being irrevocably tied to the apron-strings of the settlers. They appealed to the British Government to stop the tide of Jewish immigrations and to deal with the problems arising out of the immigrations that had already taken place. Having failed to get satisfaction, they resorted to violence against the Jews who were prompt to retaliate. In consequence, serious Arab-Jew riots became the order of the day and the British Government in Palestine was hard put to it to maintain law and order in the country. The Government brought forward a scheme for partitioning Palestine. The suggestion fell through owing to the refusal of the parties to come to terms on the issue. It is good that they have refused to the splitting of Palestine. Nothing would be more disastrous to it and to international goodwill should the partition scheme be implemented.

These three examples show that partition is no solution to the differences between races and communities. The countries involved are small and yet a wrong approach to their problems has produced world-wide complications. The consequences of vivisectioning India would transcend all comparisons. The division would affect millions of people whose social and economic life would be completely uprooted. A divided India would be a prey to interminable strifes, necessitating the continued presence of a third party in the country. 'Split and stay' will be the only result of conceding Pakistan. Realizing the enormities involved in the League's demand, Mahatma Gandhi described the two-nations theory as an untruth. It is sad to reflect that he has now come to regard an untruth as truth.

Why should the Muslim League hanker after a separate Muslim state carved out of India? The Muslims have been living in this country for centuries without suffering any loss to their interests and without any menace to their existence. Their sense of solidarity and their very numbers are a sufficient guarantee against such an eventuality in the future. Nor is it an advantage for them to segregate themselves in a tiny and unproductive corner of India. This vast quadrilateral with its three sides swept

by the waters of the seas and with its fourth guarded by a mountain-barrier is the natural home of a single people. The extensive resources of the country are as much theirs as of any other people inhabiting it. Why should they choose to pass a self-denying ordinance upon themselves in quest of unthinkable and meretricious advantages in a so-called Muslim state? In a world of interdependence nothing is more disadvantageous than the desire for isolation. The people of an isolated state cannot be progressive and will expose themselves to the evils of stagnation and decay. Pakistan cannot be a big state, nor will its people have even a tithe of the opportunities which they can confidently expect in a united and free India. It is profitable to hear what a well-known authority says on the handicaps of a small state. In his book *The Prospects of Democracy and Other Essays* (p. 128) Sir Alfred Zimmern says :

'Fifth century Athens was both a municipality and a world capital, and the same is true, in lesser degree, of the mediaeval republics of Italy. But today I fear it must be admitted that it is difficult to live absorbed in the affairs of a local county or even a small State such as Wales or Ireland would be if they were independent, without sinking into illiberal provincialism.'

Moreover, even if we subscribe to the two-nations theory of the Muslim League, no case is made out for creating a new state for the Muslims. The theory of John Stuart Mill that 'the boundaries of governments should coincide in the main with those of nationalities' is an unrealizable and an unnecessary utopia, at least in most countries. I have already shown the composite character of the populations inhabiting the Succession States, although every effort was made by the framers of the Peace Treaties of the last war to adhere to Mill's principle of homogeneity. Indeed, homogeneity of population is a luxury which very few countries can afford. But it is a luxury which can easily be dispensed with, for it is not against the law of nature nor against human instinct for diverse races and communities to live together peacefully in the same country. The examples of Russia and China are a striking illustration of the fact that racial and religious diversities are no bar to harmonious and creative living. Take again the case of South Africa. In that country the British and the Boers fought each other to the bitterest end, and when both sides exhausted their pugnacity, they discovered that the two nationalities could not live apart without serious detriment

o the economic interests of both. So, the enemies forgot their long-standing antagonisms and clasped one another's hand in friendship. Today they are pulling together in unison, accepting South Africa as their common motherland.

Should we not learn our lessons from these examples? India, it is true, is the land of many communities, but it has also been the ancient home of toleration and goodwill. After all, it is not such a disadvantage to have diversity in our national life, for variety is in fact the manifestation of a fuller and richer life. If we have the wisdom of learning the art of living together, as our fathers did for centuries, our very diversity which is adduced today as the cause of our undoing, could be transmuted into one of harmonious and creative living. In the dust and storm of controversy raised by the two-nations theory, let us not allow our minds to be obscured by the truth that mixed populations are not such an unmitigated evil. Let us remember the words of wisdom contained in the epoch-making essay of Lord Acton on nationality. The subject is important and apposite to this discussion, and I, therefore, offer no apology for quoting Lord Acton at some length. Here is the passage from his *History of Freedom and Other Essays* (pp. 290-295):

'The co-existence of several nations under the same State is a test as well as the best security of its freedom. The combination of different nations in one State is as necessary a condition of civilized life as the combination of men in society. Inferior races are raised by living in political union with races intellectually superior. Exhausted and decaying nations are revived by the contact of a younger vitality. The fertilizing and regenerating process can only be obtained by living under one government. It is in the cauldron of the State that the fusion takes place by which the vigour, the knowledge and the capacity of one portion of mankind may be communicated to another.

A nation can be vigorous and progressive when it is not the result of merely physical and material causes but a moral and a political being; not the creation of geographical and physiological unity but developed in the course of history by the action of the State. *A State may in course of time produce a nationality but that a nationality should constitute a state is contrary to the nature of modern civilization.* (Italics mine)

Small nation States in order to maintain their integrity have

to attach themselves by confederations or family alliances to Great Powers and they lose something of their independence. Their tendency is to isolate and shut off their inhabitants, to narrow the horizon of their views and to dwarf in some degree the *proportion* of their ideas. Public opinion cannot maintain its liberty and purity in such small dimensions and the currents that come from larger communities sweep over a contracted territory. In a small homogeneous population there is hardly room for a natural classification of society or of inner groups of interests, that set bounds to sovereign power.

The Government and the subjects contend with borrowed weapons. The resources of the one and the aspirations of the other are derived from some external source and the consequence is that the country becomes the instrument and scene of contests in which it is not interested.

For these reasons, Pakistan is unnecessary, impracticable and dangerous. It is unnecessary because the Hindus and Muslims have lived together peacefully in the past and can do so in the future ; it is impracticable because, being small and with no sound financial and economic basis, it cannot sustain itself in a world of growing interdependence ; and, lastly, it is dangerous because the seeds of strife lie fertile in it, thus making the freedom of the country a forlorn hope. The problems arising out of it are too great to be solved by our susceptibilities for personalities. We deplore Mahatma Gandhi's concession to the Pakistan principle. We do not yield to anyone in our admiration and affection for the Mahatma. He is the greatest builder of our national unity. In fact, Indian nationalism owes much more to him than to any individual, living or dead. But by a strange irony, this very architect and master-builder of the Indian nation is today contributing to the pulling down of the brick and mortar of India's unity. It would be callous to attribute motives to him ; his life has been an unflickering flame of rectitude. But the unity of India is the gift of the gods and an impartible necessity of the Indian people. On this subject of Pakistan, let us, therefore, say to the Mahatma, albeit with a heavy heart, ' Let us agree to differ ! '

Moreover, the support of Mahatma Gandhi will not solve the problem of partition, for it is impossible to ignore the forces ranged against the vivisection of the country. Since the Muslim League announced its intentions in March 1940, opposition to Pakistan has been mobilized by every section of progressive opinion in the country. It is an opposition which proceeds from no particular

PAKISTAN IS UNNECESSARY

community or party. Every caste and creed is represented in it. Nationalist Muslims, comprising the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, the Ahrars, the Momins (fifty million strong) and the Azad Muslims, have again and again expressed their solemn belief in the unity of India. It is important to recall in this connexion the thoughtful and eloquent presidential address of the late Mr Allah Baksh, who was murdered in May 1943, to the Azad Conference held in April 1940—one month after the League passed its Lahore Resolution. In it he asserted that the Hindus and Sikhs would not consent to remain in Pakistan and that, if they did, he failed to see how a purely Muslim state, which the League visualized, could come into existence and be different from the existing composite Muslim-majority Provinces. Dealing with the financial aspect of the partition scheme, he showed with a wealth of facts and figures that the new state would never be self-supporting.

‘The total revenue of the proposed Pakistan,’ he declared, ‘if all the units contemplated, including Kashmir and Bahawalpore, coalesced (excluding the cis-Ravi region, which is predominantly Hindu-cum-Sikh), would not exceed 16 or 17 crores of rupees, all of which is required for daily administration. And if the railway and customs and other central revenues of Pakistan’s share yield say another 5 or 6 crores or even 10 crores of net surplus, the whole of it will not be enough to maintain the defences of the unit against external invasions and to satisfy the interest charges and other liabilities.’

Mr Mahomedbhoy I. M. Rowjee, ex-Sheriff of Bombay, and President of H. H. The Aga Khan’s Supreme Council for India, was equally emphatic in his opposition to the partition of India. In a statement on Mr Jinnah’s Lahore speech (March 1940), he wrote thus :

‘When all the world aims and plans at further and greater unity of governments and peoples, it is strange that Mr Jinnah proposes to ‘Balkanise’ India, despite the obvious perils of the step. Thus, the leader of an organization pledged to Indian independence, strangely enough, has at last fallen quite in line with our rulers’ age-long policy of dividing India on artificial lines.

But the plain facts need no proof for all those with eyes to see, that India is and will always be one nation, despite Mr Jinnah’s wish-thoughts ; that the scramblers among the top few for power and privileges, for seats and jobs, are too super-

ificial to be a permanent barrier in the way of the organic unity that is being forged day in and day out between various sections of a people welded geographically and historically.'

Muslim divines, normally not interested in the humdrum of politics, have time and again come out of their scholarly and religious seclusion to register their protest at the League's doctrine of separatism. Mufti Kifayatulla, President of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind, Mr Abdul Qaiyum Ansari, and the leaders of the Bengal Krishak Proja Samiti have openly declared their opposition to Pakistan. The recent Conference of Azad Muslims reiterated the stand all along taken up by the nationalist Muslims since 1940. Surely, they cannot abandon their convictions merely because Mahatma Gandhi now proclaims his adhesion to the Pakistan principle.

Then there are the Sikhs. They are as much concerned over the fate of India as any other community. The Punjab will be the heart of Pakistan, and the Punjab is, as I have said before, the stronghold of Sikhism. The Sikhs, be it noted, are not a hole and corner community, and their attitude to the present controversy will have the most decisive influence on the issue of partition. We have not heard of a single responsible Sikh leader announcing his acceptance of the Pakistan principle. In fact, the whole community is solidly ranged against the League's objective. We have only to look at the daily news reports to realize the extent of Sikh opposition to Pakistan. The veteran Master Tara Singh, who had retired from public life only a few months ago, has returned to active politics solely to oppose Pakistan.

The Hindu Mahasabha has refused to look at the 'C.R. formula'. It is organizing country-wide protests against any move towards the breaking of India's unity. Is it such an inconsequential organization as to be ignored? The future events will perhaps tell.

The Liberals, too, are opposed to Pakistan. Mr Jinnah might seek to whittle down their importance by comparing them to the Dutch Army—all generals with no corporals. But the moderation and maturity of wisdom which they represent are not things to be jeered at. Here is what Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and Sir Vitthal Chandavarkar say in a joint statement issued to the press on 14th July 1944 on the 'C.R. formula':

'While we have always been in favour of properly safe-guarding the religious, cultural and economic interests of Muslims and giving them an adequate voice in the administration by

means of coalition ministries both at the Centre and in the Provinces, giving the latter the widest powers and reserving for the Centre only a few subjects like defence and some others essential for the general welfare and security of the country, we are emphatically against the partition of India as proposed in these terms.'

After pointing out that the division of India will be no panacea to our domestic problems, they conclude :

'When the tendency all the world over is to integrate, India should not move in the direction of disintegration. India divided cannot pull her weight in international affairs. Only India united can secure her proper place in the post-war world.'

I would commend my readers to a serious consideration of his statement. The Muslim League might make any demands for share in the Central and Provincial Governments. It might even ask for equal partnership with the Hindus and other communities in the governance of the country. Such a demand is capable of adjustment if the cry for vivisectioning the country is given up. Any understanding with the League is possible only on this basis. Surely, we have no right to tie the millstone round the neck of our posterity.

7. CONCLUSION

In the first Chapter I gave the text of the C.R. formula and deferred its consideration to a subsequent Chapter. Thanks, however, to the failure of the Gandhi-Jinnah talks, the C.R. formula has ceased to be a live issue. But, as it is primarily responsible for provoking a bitter controversy in the country over the Pakistan issue, a consideration of some of its implications becomes necessary. It is only fair to Mr Rajagopalachari to remember that he sponsored his formula and secured the support of Mahatma Gandhi to it in the hope that it provided a satisfactory *modus vivendi* for bringing the Congress and the League together. Nor need we doubt his sincerely felt belief that the path to Indian freedom lay only through a Congress-League collaboration. Unfortunately, events have, however, shown that his appraisal of the communal problem was distressingly wrong. Who can now doubt the correctness of Mr Savarkar's opinion, expressed some years ago, that the hopes of Indian freedom built upon a Congress-League *rapprochement*,

are little better than a superstition ? Indeed, Mr Rajagopalachari made too many generous assumptions as regards the necessity and feasibility of an understanding with the League when he prepared himself to surrender a cherished principle. It should have been easy for an astute statesman like him to realize what the League really stands for and with what material it has built up its power and influence during these recent years. Unfortunately, he allowed his anxiety for a settlement to outstrip his accustomed clarity of perception and thus unwittingly became the centre of a stormy controversy.

But we are concerned here, not so much with the motives of Mr Rajagopalachari as with his formula. The vital part of this formula is its clause two in which the 'formation of a sovereign state separate from Hindustan' is clearly envisaged. The conditions for its attainment, namely, the verdict of the affected people, based upon a plebiscite, and freedom to the parties concerned to canvass opinion for or against partition are, I suggest, inconsequential. The territories from which Pakistan is sought to be created are the existing Muslim-majority Provinces. In them non-Muslim opinion is hardly likely to prevail against that of a solid Muslim majority. It is easy to realize that the issue of Pakistan will not be placed before the people in its true perspective. An abstract consideration of the evil consequences of vivisectioning the country cannot catch the imagination of the masses as readily as an appeal to religious sentiment and religious emotion can. Indeed, whatever support the League has been able to gather for its objective is essentially derived from its raging and tearing campaign in which appeal to religion and play upon the credulity of the masses have played no little part. 'Islam will be in danger without Pakistan' is a more effective slogan than an abstract disquisition on the necessity of preserving the unity of India. The plebiscite will be a foregone conclusion when religious propaganda is pitted against reason. It will, therefore, be no sure guide for eliciting the verdict of the people on the necessity or otherwise of Pakistan.

Nor is clause four, envisaging a mutual agreement for safeguarding defence, commerce, communications and 'other essential purposes', calculated to inspire confidence that the two States will work together in peace and mutual understanding. In his correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, Mr Jinnah has clearly stated that an agreement on the administration of common matters between the two States should be considered only after the new State is

CONCLUSION

established. In other words, he demands unfettered freedom for his new State to decide what constitute common matters between Hindustan and Pakistan. It is possible that an independent and self-regarding Pakistan, priding in its newly acquired sovereignty, may consider that no common ground exists between itself and Hindustan. It is equally possible that it may develop exclusive and militant nationalism, in imitation of the numerous small States of Europe. Even assuming that an independent Pakistan will acquiesce in collaborating with Hindustan in the matters mentioned in the C.R. formula, the duration of such co-operation will depend entirely upon its own volition. It will be free to break away from Hindustan at any time, with consequences too frightful to imagine. The fact is that no permanence can be guaranteed for any arrangement between the two States when once the principle of their absolute independence from one another is recognized. In such a situation, even solemnly concluded agreements are apt to be disowned as mere expediences of the hour.

These are some of the obvious pitfalls in the C.R. formula, but its omissions are even more conspicuous. The Indian States and their ninety-two million people are nowhere in the picture. It is perhaps in the best traditions of British Indian politics to ignore the existence of the States and to treat their subjects as underdogs in India's national life, but no plan for the country will survive the iniquity of leaving the States out of the picture. It is no use disguising the fact that the problem of partition is rendered infinitely more complex by the existence of the States. What, for example, will be the constitutional position of the numerous Hindu and Sikh States in the proposed Pakistan and what will be the relationship between Hyderabad and other Muslim States *vis a vis* the Government of Hindustan? What remedy, other than coercion, will lie in the hands of the Governments of Pakistan and Hindustan in making their paramountcy acceptable to the States within their respective jurisdictions? In attempting an answer to these questions, it is profitable to bear in mind the nature of the tie which binds the States with the British Government. Besides pledging itself to perpetuate the States, the Paramount Power has given solemn assurances to the Princes that no constitutional plan would be imposed upon them if it is not acceptable to them. Whether the Government is right or wrong in thus committing itself and whether the insistence of the Princes upon a scrupulous adherence to the terms of their so-called treaties is based upon reason and historical facts such as political practice and sufferance, are issues

whose detailed discussion does not come within the purview of this book. But the fact that the States will protest at any political arrangement which will not accord with their interests and that they have a willing and sympathetic listener in the British Government is beyond doubt. It does not require much political acumen to realize that today the Princes and the British Government have come together much more closely than ever before. Their colossal sacrifices during the last and the present war on behalf of Britain have secured for them a privileged position. Some decades ago Professor Westlake described the nature of the relationship between the Princes and the Paramount Power in the following words. He said :

‘There is good reason to believe that by them and us a comradeship in difficulty and danger is indeed felt, such a comradeship as engages the strenuous and loyal exertions of a ship’s crew under the categorical imperative of the captain.’
(*The Collected Papers of John Westlake on Public International Law*, p. 632)

Such a comradeship between the two parties is felt much more today than when Professor Westlake wrote these lines. It is, therefore, futile to suppose that the solution of the communal problem, leading to the freedom of India, could be achieved over the heads of the Princes and their people.

What, then, is the attitude of the Princes and their people to Pakistan? The utterances of the spokesmen of the States people leave us in no doubt as to how they view the prospect of dividing the country. From Kashmir to Cape Comorin, between whose vast stretch of territory hundreds of States, big and small, are situated, the cry has been taken up against vivisection. We know too well how the leader of the Kashmir State subjects, a Muslim, recently warned Mr Jinnah against thrusting his oars into the domestic affairs of that State. It is, however, not easy to obtain a public testimony to the hostility of the Princes to Pakistan. Constitutionally, they are not free to openly express themselves on British Indian politics. But we can trust Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, the Dewan of Travancore, to know their mind. A redoubtable champion of the Princely cause, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer has sometimes taken up a position on behalf of the Princes, which it is not easy to reconcile with his robust nationalism, but his outspoken utterances against Pakistan give us a valuable insight into the working of the Princely mind on this subject. In a statement to the joint session of the Travancore Legislature on August

1, 1944, the Dewan made the following observations :

'Not one of the Indian States will consent to the dismemberment of India into Pakistan, Hindustan, Dravidsthan or any other Stan. The States cannot be ignored in this discussion either by the British Government or the Government of India or the Congress and the Muslim League. Many leading States are ahead of British India in many directions. More progress may have to be achieved, but in any event the States are not unpatriotic. They have considerable administrative experience and won't consent to divided loyalty due to competing sovereignties based on communal or racial grounds. The Travancore Government and the British Government, for instance, had entered into certain treaties in 1795 and 1805. These treaties mean a link, weak or strong as the case may be. With whom is this link to be in future ? To one Government or two or ten Governments ? The answer is clear. What is to happen to States like Hyderabad or Bhopal or Patiala ? Will they be under the Hindu or Muslim paramountcy ? So far as this Government is concerned and so far as I can predict of other States in India, whatever proposals or counter-proposals may be evolved by political and quasi-political leaders, they will not assent to nor be a party to any variant of Pakistan. This may be confidently asserted so far as most States are concerned.'

I offer no apology for quoting the Travancore Dewan at such length, for his utterances lend a weighty contribution to the controversy on Pakistan from the point of view of the States. It is significant that Mr Jinnah has made no categorical declaration on the position of the States in his project for dividing the country, apart from stating that his demand is confined to British India. How the constitutional, financial and economic problems arising out of such an exclusion can be solved is left to one's own conjecture. If, indeed, it is thought that the status quo should govern the constitutional position of the States, then the continued presence of the British Government in India to exercise its powers of paramountcy over the States will become an indispensable necessity. Will such an arrangement be satisfactory and will it ever lead to a complete devolution of power from British to Indian hands in the government of the country ?

Nor are the economic and financial problems arising out of dividing the country fully realized. It is a matter of common

knowledge that the crying need of the hour is the amelioration of the condition of India's millions. Poverty, ignorance, dirt and disease are their perpetual enemies, dogging their footsteps at every turn. As Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru truly remarks, the Indian peasant is 'born to Endless Night'. It is the appalling poverty of our masses, with no parallel anywhere in the world, which is at the root of all their misery.

'Want and disease', says Professor Gyan Chand in his illuminating contribution to the study of the Indian population problem, 'are good companions and where one is found, the other follows by an irresistible attraction.'

As a result of this companionship between poverty and disease, millions upon millions of deaths from hunger and disease occur in this country. It is not my intention to write here an essay on the problem of India's poverty, disease and illiteracy, but it is impossible not to refer to it in a discussion on Pakistan whose attainment is bound to make any country-wide national planning almost impossible.

A few important facts about the economic problem of India may be noted here. Dr Akroyd, Director of Nutrition Research, Coonoor, tells us that every individual must spend between Rs. 5 and Rs. 6 per month on his food and that a family consisting of father and mother with three children must earmark Rs. 18 per month or Rs. 216 per annum for food. This is a modest estimate of an individual's food requirements and has no relation to the western standard of living. With their per capita income of Rs. 65 the Indian masses are incapable of earning sufficient money to spend on their food such a small sum as Rs. 5 per month for each individual. Thus, the problems of clothing, housing, education, and sanitary and medical provision are beyond their capacity to be solved.

Realizing this appalling condition of the Indian masses, several plans of national economic reconstruction are being seriously considered. The plan sponsored by the leading businessmen of Bombay, well-known as the 'Bombay Plan', consider that 'in order to secure a minimum standard of living, a per capita income of Rs. 74 at pre-war prices is essential.' The planning envisaged in this scheme is estimated to cost Rs. 10,000 crores. The authors of the scheme are confident of finding this huge capital. They, however, make the basic assumption that

'on the termination of the war or shortly thereafter, a national government will come into existence at the centre which

will be vested with full freedom in economic matters. The maintenance of the economic unity of India being, in our view, an essential condition of any effective planning, we have assumed for the purpose of our plan that the future Government of India will be constituted on a federal basis and that the jurisdiction of the Central Government in economic matters will extend over the whole of India.'

The People's Plan, being the Report of the Post-war Reconstruction Committee of the Indian Federation of Labour, considers an outlay of Rs. 15,000 crores as necessary for industrial and agricultural development as well as for providing the people with adequate social services. In his Foreword to this Plan Mr M. N. Roy estimates that 'at the end of ten years, agricultural production will increase by 400 per cent or more, and industrial production by 600 per cent. The standard of living of the masses will rise by 300 per cent, exclusive of the services such as health, education and housing which will be provided for them.' The People's Plan is emphatic in urging the necessity of State control over national planning and maintains that 'the future state in India will have to be a genuine democratic state.' It holds that to be so, the state must have a constitution framed according to certain Fundamental Principles. Points one, two and three of these Fundamental Principles read thus :

1. The supreme sovereignty belongs to the people, to be exercised through the direct control of the executive as well as the legislative functions of the State by the elected representatives of the people.
2. The Federal Democratic State is to be composed of a number of autonomous republics built on the basis of cultural and linguistic homogeneity as far as possible.
3. All component parts of the Federation are to have a uniformly democratic constitution.

It will thus be seen that both the Bombay Plan and the People's Plan, as indeed any other Plan aiming at the regeneration of the Indian masses, emphasize the unity of India as the first pre-requisite. These Plans are not conceived in a spirit of narrow-minded exclusiveness but are intended to bring prosperity and happiness to every section of the Indian population. Mr Rajagopalachari's concession to Pakistan and the insistence of Mr Jinnah upon his pound of flesh are not calculated to promote economic planning on an all-India scale. There will be no com-

munity of interests and a unified policy between the present Muslim majority Provinces and the rest of India if the former crystallize themselves into an independent sovereign state. Apart from the possibility of the new state following the dangerous path of economic nationalism, the originators of national planning in Hindustan will naturally be unwilling to extend their project to Pakistan and thus place it at the mercy of what will avowedly be a foreign government. The plain fact is that Pakistan will offer itself as an insuperable obstacle to the economic rehabilitation of India. If the Muslim League succeeds in thwarting the freedom of India and if it persists in realizing its goal, it must then be prepared to incur the responsibility and odium of frustrating the masses of India in their struggle for economic emancipation. The League is playing a dangerous game in which the fate of 400 millions is involved. The people of the country are not interested in its abstract theories. What they need is economic security and a reasonable opportunity to share the joys and comforts of life, which they do not possess today. The Muslim community will suffer as much and perhaps even more than other communities if Pakistan becomes *fait accompli*.

It is also in the financial interests of India that its unity must be maintained. Since the establishment of the British Government in this country, India is being financially administered as a single unit. Her assets and liabilities are derived from and are based upon the same system. Crores upon crores of rupees are being spent every day for war purposes. What colossal figure this expenditure will eventually reach no one can say at present. How will this burden be shared between the two States? Will Pakistan, with its slender resources, be able to shoulder the incubus of a national debt? I give this example only to show how complex will be the problem of financial adjustment, should there be a division of the country.

It is necessary in this connexion to correct a misapprehension caused by Mr Rajagopalachari's utterances that his pattern of Pakistan is in accord with the Russian system of autonomous Republics. There is in fact no analogy between the Russian system and the situation which will arise by the division of India. Both are unique in their own way, the one emphasizing unity amidst a bewildering diversity and the other seeking to destroy the existing unity in the search for diversity. The history of Russian unity makes an enthralling study. Russia is the home of one hundred racial and national groups which, under the Tsarist

regime, exhibited every kind of political, cultural, racial and religious disparity. The Tsars unblushingly used these differences in support of their autocracy. The author of the article entitled 'End of oppression—National Question Solved' in the book *Soviet Russia : The Secret of Her Success* tells us how the Tsarist Government incited 'national hatred most often as a means of stemming the rising tide of revolutionary movement in the country'.

All this exploitation and incitement of national and racial hatred ceased as soon as Tsardom toppled down into the abyss. One of the first acts of the Soviet Government was to abolish racial and national hostility and to punish by law anyone guilty of fomenting it. Article 123 of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. lays down that :

'Equality of rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R. irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.'

Thus, by declaring and strictly enforcing the equality of the Russian citizens, the Soviet Government proceeded to level up differences between man and man and paved the way for the growth of a genuine community of interests between the most divergent elements in Russia's life.

It is true that the Soviet Union comprises eleven, and since the war sixteen, autonomous Republics. It is equally true that the constituent units of the Union enjoy a great degree of internal autonomy, with their own linguistic, cultural and religious freedom. But this fact should not obscure the truth that the Soviet Union has no parallel in history. The Soviet Government has no use for the political and social conceptions prevalent in other countries. Its emphasis is upon the economic equality of its citizens. By controlling the means of production and by abolishing private enterprise and the consequent profit-making motive, the Soviet Government has successfully eliminated the steep gradients which exist between the rich and the poor in other countries. The care with which it provides social services for the people has reconciled them to the deprivation of their private property. The amazing speeding up of industrial and agricultural production in every part of Russia has improved the economic condition of the people out of all proportion to what prevailed under the Tsarist regime. Even the most remote and backward parts of the Union, which the Tsars looked upon as a happy hunting-ground for exploitation, have intensely felt the impulse of the successive Five Year Plans. has failed to win the approval of Mr Jinnah. In a speech to his

literally metamorphosed them beyond all recognition. It is this economic interdependence of the constituent units and the prosperity which such independence has brought to them, which explains why they so steadfastly adhere to the union despite the right of secession guaranteed to them by the Soviet Constitution. Russia has thus come to be regarded as MATUSHKA ZEMLIA, little mother earth, by every Russian, no matter to what nationality and to which part of the Union he belongs. It is interesting to note that although M. Stalin is willing to provide a separate homeland for the Russian Jews, they have no desire to avail themselves of the offer. Complete absence of anti-Semitism in Russia has rendered the offer unnecessary. (See *Russia Fights On*, by Maurice Hindus, p. 184.) It is thus obvious that, although the Russian Republics are technically free to break away from the Union, self-interest precludes them from doing so. Nor is it true that M. Stalin would favour such a secession. Maurice Hindus records the opinion of a Kiev University Professor who told him thus :

‘I am convinced that if the Ukraine became independent it would either fight Russia to achieve sovereignty over it, or Russia would fight the Ukraine to retrieve the former unity of the two countries.’

All doubts on this question are set at rest by the following opinion of Hindus. He says :

‘Though the Soviet Constitution guarantees the right of secession to any national unit, in reality any advocate of such secession is treated as a counter-revolutionary.’ (See *Russia Fights On*, p. 175.)

Hindus, I need hardly add, is one of the best informed men on contemporary Russia.

Thus, Mr Rajagopalachari’s references to Soviet Russia are hardly a recommendation for the acceptance of his formula. On the contrary, the amazing unity of purpose and action which Russia has achieved for the fulfilment of higher objectives by subordinating differences of a very serious character amongst its people ought to serve as an inspiration and an object-lesson to the peoples of those countries where strife is sought when harmony is so easy of achievement. Pakistan is, therefore, an antithesis of the Russian example, for the forces at work in that country are definitely towards unity and integration.

Yet, a proposal so revolutionary in its scope and significance has failed to win the approval of Mr Jinnah. In a speech to his

party as early as on 30th July 1944 he condemned the C. R. formula in the most unsparing terms. Let me quote his own words:

‘His [Mr Rajagopalachari’s] formula is a parody, a negation of, and intended to torpedo, the Muslim League’s resolution of March 1940 ; and when he says that his formula concedes all that the Muslim League had ever demanded by its resolution, it is the grossest travesty.’

Yet, it was this intensely disliked formula which Mahatma Gandhi sought to make the starting-point for his negotiations with the League leader. If we bear this fact in mind, it will be obvious that the failure of the talks between the two leaders became inevitable.

I do not wish to take up much space by dealing at length with the Gandhi-Jinnah talks and with the correspondence which formed the basis of their negotiations. But in order to locate the rock on which the parleys foundered, it is necessary for us to be clear in our own minds on certain basic issues arising out of the Pakistan controversy. In putting forward their compromise proposal for the acceptance of the League, Mahatma Gandhi and Mr Rajagopalachari did not subscribe to the views and theories held by Mr Jinnah on the subject of dividing the country. They do not believe that the Hindus and Muslims are two distinct nations, nor do they consider that Pakistan is absolutely necessary for the Muslims. Their main object in making their offer was to smoothen the path of Indian freedom by promoting a greater unity in the country. It was their passionate desire to see their country free and their impatience at the obstacles in the way of such a consummation that led them to the desperate expedient of conceding the Pakistan demand. Viewing the vivisection project as a necessary evil, it was in the nature of things impossible for them to wax eloquent or enthusiastic over it. On the contrary, their tendencies were all towards mitigating its evil consequences, as far as this could possibly be achieved. That, to my mind, explains why the C.R. formula lays down the necessity ‘for safe-guarding defence, commerce and communications and other essential purposes.’

Mr Jinnah’s demands are, however, based upon no such considerations. From his point of view, his demand admits of no compromise or adjustment. Pakistan is not a mere political necessity ; it is the birth-right of the Muslims and an article of faith with them. How such fundamentally contrary views and

attitudes to the problem could be reconciled by means of negotiations was a mystery which no one could unravel. But on 9th September 1944 the two leaders met in the vain hope of achieving the impossible. They met only to realize at the very start that an unbridgable gulf separated the one from the other. Mr Jinnah categorically declared to Mahatma Gandhi that the Muslims were entitled to 'self-determination as a nation and not as a territorial unit, and that we are entitled to exercise our inherent right as a Muslim nation which is our birth-right.' He further reiterated this view by declaring :

'The right of self-determination, which we claim, postulates that we are a nation, and as such it would be self-determination of the Mussalmans, and they alone are entitled to exercise that right.'

This view, besides reaffirming his two-nations theory and emphasizing the 'inalienable' right of the Muslims to separate homelands carved out of the Indian territories, refuses to take cognizance of non-Muslim opinion in the matter of separation. Nor does it countenance the holding of a plebiscite in the affected areas in the manner envisaged in the C. R. formula. Mr Jinnah's attitude on another vital question, namely, the necessity of safe-guarding matters of common interest between the two States was equally uncompromising. Dealing with this subject he wrote thus :

'There cannot be defence and similar matters of "common concern", when it is accepted that Pakistan and Hindustan will be two separate independent sovereign states.'

These views which became the subject-matter of a series of his replies to Mahatma Gandhi's letters, naturally failed to conduce either to a compromise or to a clarification of the momentous issues raised by the Mahatma in his letter of 15th September 1944.

Realizing the intense dislike which Mr Jinnah showed to the C.R. formula, Mahatma Gandhi took the earliest opportunity of 'shunting' it from the discussions and sought to make the League's Lahore Resolution of March 1940 an alternative basis for the negotiations. His letter of 15th September 1944 contained an expression of his apprehensions as well as his doubts on the implication of the resolution and he, therefore, called upon Mr Jinnah to allay his fears and clear his doubts. One cannot help feeling that Mr Jinnah's reply of 17th September was hardly calculated to fulfil these requirements. On the contrary, it contained a mere reiteration of his favourite two-nations theory and an explanation

of his own point of view of the Pakistan demand, without giving a detailed explanation of the necessity, the feasibility and the consequences of dividing the country in the manner desired by him. Important questions raised in the Mahatma's letter were dismissed in one word or phrase by merely saying 'yes' or 'no' or 'irrelevant' or 'does not arise'. It is true that not all the points raised in the Mahatma's letter of 15th September arose out of the Lahore resolution, but surely Gandhiji was entitled to know fully and clearly the scope and significance of partition so long as it remained the basic principle of the Lahore resolution. It is not an approved method of clarification to sidetrack important issues on the technical ground that they are not relevant to a particular context. The two leaders did not meet merely as lawyers, although their legal knowledge was an asset for clarifying the issues under discussion. They met as political leaders with a view to understanding each other's point of view on matters of vital national importance. The student of Pakistan searches in vain in the Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence for new and useful light on the subject. The points on which light is sought still remain unexplained.

I reproduce below some of the more important questions and answers contained in Gandhiji's letter of 15th September and Mr Jinnah's reply of 17th September in order to show how utterly sterile the answers were and in what an atmosphere of utter futility the talks were conducted.

Question 3 : 'What is it that distinguishes an Indian Muslim from every other Indian, if not his religion ?'

Answer 3 : Mr Jinnah gives the following exposition of the two-nations theory :

'We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definitions or test of a nation. We are a nation of a hundred million, and, what is more, we are a nation with our own distinctive culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions—in short, we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation.'

Having already devoted a whole Chapter to a discussion of the two-nations theory, it is unnecessary for me to join issues with Mr Jinnah over such a sweeping generalization. But as the whole *raison d'être* of Pakistan depends upon this theory, its fallacy needs to be further exposed and I cannot think of a more suitable method of doing so than by quoting Sir Rustom Masani on the subject. Thus says the Parsi leader :

'The ears of the chronicler are deaf to harmony. He records only the discordant notes. If two members of a family or two groups of people within a community or a nation live together in peace for ages, scarcely anyone takes note of it. But the moment they fall out, the story of their feud forms an interesting theme for gossiping neighbours and the press, and through these channels it reaches the historian. For hundreds of years Hindus and Muslims have fraternized with one another and lived in peace in villages and even in cities, conscious of the essential unity of their cultural life and tolerant of the differences in regard to matters admitting of diversity. Those long chapters of history are forgotten, but the episodes of passing prejudices and disturbances stirred up by religious bigots and other mischief-makers are presented in lurid colours.'

Sir Rustom gives a further description of the disruptionists in these words :

'The most vocal and influential classes working for exclusiveness are the intoxicated communalists, pseudo-nationalists and puny politicians who feel that they can thrive only in an atmosphere of strife. The worst exclusionists, one has to admit with shame, are some of the educated men and women prominent in public life. They are the most bare-faced disturbers of the peace of the country, shattering all hope of unity.'

Sir Jogendra Singh is a prominent Sikh leader who says that during his 'fairly long and eventful life' he has not been aware of any diversity of culture. After recounting how he spent his childhood, boyhood and youth in Muslim companionship, he says that among his Muslim friends was no less a person than the late Dr Mohd. Iqbal. Writing about the 'Poet of Islam' Sir Jogendra Singh says that the late poet sang of 'My India' and aspired to raise a 'Shivala', New Temple, 'to draw all the people to worship at the shrine of motherhood.' He quotes Dr Iqbal's verse :

Religion does not teach hatred.

We are Hindees

And Hindustan is ours.

His inherited culture', says Sir Jogendra Singh, 'expressed itself in songs of unity, till political currents, unfortunately, carried him to the communal camp.' Further on he makes the following pregnant observation :

'It must, however, be submitted that some of our politicians preach the gospel of separation in the name of distinct differences in culture, but they will be hard put to it to prove any difference in culture among ninety per cent. of our population, nor can they in their own selves conceal the gifts of a common heritage and evade the dictates of their own conscience.' (This and the above quotation have been taken from the Oxford University Press Pamphlet : '*The Cultural Problem*'.)

In view of these impartial and weighty views on the unity of India, the League and its leaders will be hard put to prove their two-nations theories and to exonerate themselves from the evil consequences of propagating their unfounded theories. They need to be reminded of what Mahatma Gandhi so appropriately pointed out to Mr Jinnah. Thus wrote the Mahatma to the League leader :

'I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock.'

So much for Mr Jinnah's claim about Muslim nationality.

Question 6 : 'Are the constituents in the two zones, to constitute "independent states", an undefined number in each zone ?'

Answer 6 : 'No. They form units of Pakistan.'

Surely, this is not an adequate answer. How can there be one unit when the territories of Pakistan will not be contiguous ? Are the north-western and eastern zones sought to be connected by means of a corridor ? Who is to provide this corridor ? And why ? If no such concession is forthcoming, how else will the territories be linked ? These are vital questions and there is a good deal of discussion and speculation about them. We do not find a clarification of this matter anywhere in the correspondence.

Question 9 : 'Have you examined the position and satisfied yourself that these "independent states" will be materially and otherwise benefitted by being split up into fragments ?

Answer 9 : 'Does not relate to clarification.'

This is a curious answer indeed ! Mr Jinnah was not playing the role of a commissioner, labouring under the handicap of clearly defined terms of reference. He wanted Gandhiji to accept his own brand of Pakistan. It was, therefore, his clear duty to explain to Gandhiji the consequences of dividing the country. This is not the method of converting a critic to one's own point of view. Mr Jinnah cannot be unaware that there is a genuine and widespread fear in the country that Pakistan will spell all-round ruin. Apart from its political implications, the financial and economic consequences of Pakistan need to be elucidated.

Question 10 : 'Please satisfy me that these independent sovereign states will not be a collection of poor states, a menace to themselves and to the rest of India.'

Answer 10 : 'My answer to (9) covers this point.'

My remarks in (9) about the inadequacy of the reply covers this answer !

Question 11 : 'Pray show me by facts and figures or otherwise how the independence and welfare of India as a whole can be brought about by the acceptance of the resolution.'

Answer 11 : 'Does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution. Surely this is not asking for clarification of the resolution. I have, in numerous speeches of mine and the Muslim League in its resolutions, pointed out that this is the only solution of India's problem and the road to achieve freedom and independence of the people of India.'

It is, of course, true that Mr Jinnah's speeches and the resolutions of his party are replete with references to the necessity of dividing the country before it could aspire to freedom. But mere references are no answer to the widespread and well-founded belief that Pakistan will bring neither freedom nor peace to the country. The advantage of the League's

CONCLUSION

panacea must be proved and not merely stated as an axiom.

Question 12 : 'How are the Muslims under the Princes to be disposed of as a result of this scheme ?'

Note.—The question would have been clearer and more comprehensive if the word 'people' had been used instead of the word 'Muslims'.

Answer 12 : "Muslims under the Princes". The Lahore resolution is only confined to British India. This question does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution.'

Such an important problem as India under the Princes, covering an area of 712,508 square miles with a population of 93,189,233 people, cannot be so lightly brushed aside. It is easy to understand Mr Jinnah's anxiety not to come into conflict with the Princes and their people over his Pakistan demand. But the difficulties of realizing the League's objective cannot be solved by maintaining such discreet reticences. The States are an organic part of India and their voice is bound to prevail.

Question 14 : 'Will you please define the "adequate, effective and mandatory safe-guards" for minorities referred to in the second part of the resolution ?'

Answer 14 : 'The adequate, effective and mandatory safe-guards for minorities, referred to in the resolution, are a matter for negotiation and settlement with the minorities in the respective States, viz. Pakistan and Hindustan.'

The question is whether such a settlement could ever be possible. Mr Jinnah does not want to accept for the Muslims the position of a minority in the country although they are in a definite minority. Non-Muslim communities, particularly the Hindus who belong to the majority community, are under no obligation to accept the status of a statutory minority in any part of the country. There can be no reciprocity when the deal is obviously one-sided. Moreover, in the Land of the Paks guarantees to minorities will have only an ephemeral value.

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

Question 15 (a): 'Are the people in the regions falling under the plan to have any voice in the matter of separation and, if so, how is it to be ascertained?'

Answer 15 (a): 'Does not arise by way of clarification.'

This is an amazing reply. If this point does not need clarification, one wonders what else will. Assuming that all the Muslims in the would-be Pakistan, or an overwhelming majority of them, are solidly behind Mr Jinnah,—and this is a very big assumption indeed—it does not follow that Pakistan should become a *fait accompli*. As I have already shown, the population of non-Muslims in the Muslim majority Provinces is considerable, with a definite majority for them in some Divisions both in Bengal and the Punjab. Their financial and economic interests in the regions sought to be divided are the main-stay of those areas. Such questions as the necessity of consulting their wishes and of protecting their interests cannot be ignored. It is obvious that the problem of minorities, which in fact is the cause of all the present furor, will not be solved under Pakistan or Hindustan if the existing communal composition of the populations in the two States is allowed to remain. If the alternative of transference of populations is suggested, will it not be a mad venture? Mr Jinnah states in another letter, dated 21st September 1944, that the Muslims alone are entitled to exercise the right of self-determination. This is an impossible contention, for it ignores the voice, wishes and interests of forty million non-Hindus. Such an iniquity can never succeed.

Question 15 (b): 'What is the provision for defence and similar matters of common concern contemplated in the Lahore resolution?'

Answer 15 (b): 'Does not arise by way of clarification.'

Mr Jinnah has, however, stated his views on this subject in his other letters. In those of 21 September and 25 September 1944 he refuses to make a commitment in the manner desired by Gandhiji or as envisaged in the C.R. formula. He holds that 'all these matters, which are the life-blood of any State, cannot be delegated to any central authority or

CONCLUSION

105

Government'. He wants to leave them to be decided between the two States *after* Pakistan is created. He thus refuses to consider the possibilities of the new State deciding not to have any truck with Hindustan except to pick up a quarrel!

Question 15 (c): 'There are many groups of Muslims who have continuously expressed dissent from the policy of the League. While I am prepared to accept the preponderating influence and position of the League and have approached you for that very reason, is it not our joint duty to remove their doubts and carry them with us by making them feel that they and their supporters have not been practically disenfranchized?'

Answer 15 (c): 'The Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organization of Muslim India.'

This is indeed a tall claim. Even the Dictators in the authoritarian States would hesitate to make such a categorical declaration about their representative character. The League's importance has grown in recent years by its opportunist tactics and by its bellicose policies and programmes. There is a large body of thinking Muslims who view the League's separatist politics with disfavour. Most of the Muslim Divines and other less vocal but numerically considerable groups realize the horrors of vivisection. Their voice is not heard so effectively as that of the League whose organization and control of the propaganda machinery give it an unfair advantage over its Muslim critics and opponents. Moreover, the Government's policy and the mistaken notions of the Congress leaders have lent much plausibility to the League's so-called representative character.

The foregoing is, I claim, a fair summary of the position taken up by Mr Jinnah and of the difficulty of Mahatma Gandhi to understand that position. Gandhiji wanted in all sincerity to know and to be convinced of the desirability, the practicability and, above all, the implications of dividing the country, but Mr Jinnah lifted the whole issue from the region of discussion and compromise and demanded Pakistan of his own pattern in terms of a categorical imperative. Gandhiji felt that if the division was

IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY

unavoidable, the grave responsibility of taking such a step should be thrown on the shoulders of the affected people themselves. Mr Jinnah categorically refused to accept any such procedure and demanded an immediate recognition of the N.W.F. Province, the whole of the Punjab, Sind, Bengal and Assam as the area of an absolutely independent Muslim sovereign state. From his point of view, the necessity of consulting the wishes of the various communities in the would-be Pakistan area was an irrelevant consideration. Nor would he consent to bind Pakistan to any arrangement of mutual co-operation between the two States. Thus, the talks from first to last proceeded along parallel lines with no point of contact even on the most trivial issue. Gandhiji made a supreme bid for preventing the talks from ending in a fiasco by making two suggestions. He suggested that in order to get out of the impossible situation in which he and Mr Jinnah had found themselves, outside aid must be sought to arbitrate upon the points in dispute between the two. Mr Jinnah turned down this suggestion. Later, as a final expedient, Gandhiji asked that his compromise proposal should be placed before the League Council for its verdict.

'Give me an opportunity', he wrote to Mr Jinnah in his letter of 25th September 1944, 'of addressing them [the League Council]. If they feel like rejecting it, I would like you to advise the Council to put it before the open session of the League. If you will accept my advice and permit me I would attend the open session and address it.'

This suggestion, too, was not favoured by the League leader, who raised technical objections of the most inconsequential kind, as if technicalities mattered more than the fate of the country.

The fact is that Mr Jinnah did not want any compromise. His attitude was tantamount to saying : 'Concede my own brand of Pakistan, or walk out.' It is small wonder, therefore, that the failure of the talks was complete and utter. In an interview to a foreign correspondent after the failure of the talks, Mahatmaji said that Mr Jinnah while sincere was suffering from a hallucination. It is the innate goodness of Gandhiji which thus describes Mr Jinnah's obstinacy. It is, however, not correct that Mr Jinnah is labouring under a delusion or hallucination, for every one of his moves is well calculated. To keep his objective deliberately vague and to bring a relentless pressure to bear upon others to accept that undefined goal without demur are not the methods of deluded men. They are the strategy of Dictators with insatiable

~~IS PAKISTAN NECESSARY~~

ambitions. How elastic and all-embracing Mr Jinnah's pattern of Pakistan is will be realized only after one makes a complete surrender to him.

It is undeniable that, though the talks have failed, Mr Jinnah has scored a signal triumph. It hardly matters to him that today Mahatma Gandhi is not prepared to go the whole hog with him. He has secured, from his own point of view, a valuable concession from the Mahatma by winning his allegiance to the Pakistan demand. This is half the battle won and he can patiently bide his time for marching towards final victory. The defeat of Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand, has been complete and utter. He has surrendered an invaluable principle in pursuit of a mirage. By referring to his acts of omission and commission in the past he has often declared that he has committed Himalayan blunders. I do not know whether those 'blunders' were so massive and towering, but I do believe that his action in once again 'waiting' upon Mr Jinnah was one of the major mistakes of his life. He now knows the manifest futility of courting the favour of the League leader. Some years ago he often declared that Pakistan was an untruth and I appeal to him to abide by the truth of this remark. Nationalist India is fervently thankful to him for not making a complete surrender of himself to Mr Jinnah, although it is feared that his concession to the principle of vivisection will in future act as a millstone round India's neck. The country, therefore, appeals to him to throw overboard, lock, stock and barrel, not only his own proposal and the C. R. formula, but every plan and device which seeks to tamper with the unity of the land.

Such a step is the supreme necessity of the hour, for we already see around us the dangerous repercussions to Gandhiji's concession to Pakistan. We are already witnessing the depressing phenomenon of various communal groups struggling to be recognized as separate nations. In his speech at Hyderabad (Deccan) on 20th September 1944 Dr Ambedkar gave notice to India that the Depressed Classes have now emerged as a nation. Elsewhere I have referred to similar aspirations entertained by Mr Ramaswami Naicker of Madras. It is in the supreme interests of the country that such disintegrating tendencies must be stopped, and the surest means of doing so is for the nationalists, led by Mahatma Gandhi, to put their foot down firmly upon such anti-national and anti-social forces.

The unity of India is too valuable to set a price upon it. It is a precious gift and an inalienable heritage of our people. Not-

withstanding the assaults of dissidents upon it, India can attain her freedom by preserving and cherishing her unity. Sooner or later, the forces of nationalism in our country are bound to prevail. These forces will be greatly strengthened by the tendencies towards greater unity and integration which we notice everywhere outside our country. Today stricken mankind realizes the supreme necessity of organizing international co-operation on a more intensified scale. It is also felt that international peace and goodwill cannot be established unless an ancient and vast country like India is allowed a place of her own in the comity of independent nations. This is not an idle vision but a reality, which would become obvious to all those who have watched how bitter are the controversies raging in England and America on the question of Indian freedom.

India will fail hopelessly and miserably in gaining her freedom if she becomes the arena of competing sovereignties. Such a calamity will overtake her if Pakistan becomes a *fait accompli*. Let us remember that America waded through rivers of fratricidal blood in order to preserve her unity. The American example should, therefore, serve both as a lesson and a warning to the dissidents in our own country. I cannot find a more fitting description of the dangers of Pakistan than in the words of the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri. On 13th August 1944 Mr Sastri said thus :

‘I dread this idea of the division of India. I dread it like poison. It is not going to help. If it is going to bring you what you want—the independence of India—even I may be willing to say ‘Yes’, though I think it will be better for us to have one independent India, instead of four independent Indias quarrelling with each other. *However, such a thing is not going to happen.*’

It is the duty of every right thinking Indian to see to it that Pakistan is never realized.

The time has now come for the great Muslim community to bestir itself. It is time too for the thinking section of the League to realize whether it is just and proper to mortgage the future of the country and the future of the Muslims themselves to the intractable attitude of their leader. Surely, they cannot sincerely and seriously believe that Pakistan will bring a new heaven and a new earth to the Muslims. Nor is it true that their great community will be submerged in an independent and united India. Such a thing has not happened in the past and it will never happen

n the future. I appeal to them to recall upon what small and trivial differences the League has built up its present formidable demand. Is there no method of solving these differences other than by dividing the country? The Muslims can claim and obtain equal partnership with the Hindus and other communities in the government of the country. It is possible to devise a *modus vivendi* for abolishing the principle of majority and minority in the matter of administration and representation. But today all such hopes and chances of a reasonable compromise are shattered by the declared objective of the League. Mother India beckons to them to subordinate their party loyalty to the realization of her lasting peace and happiness.

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